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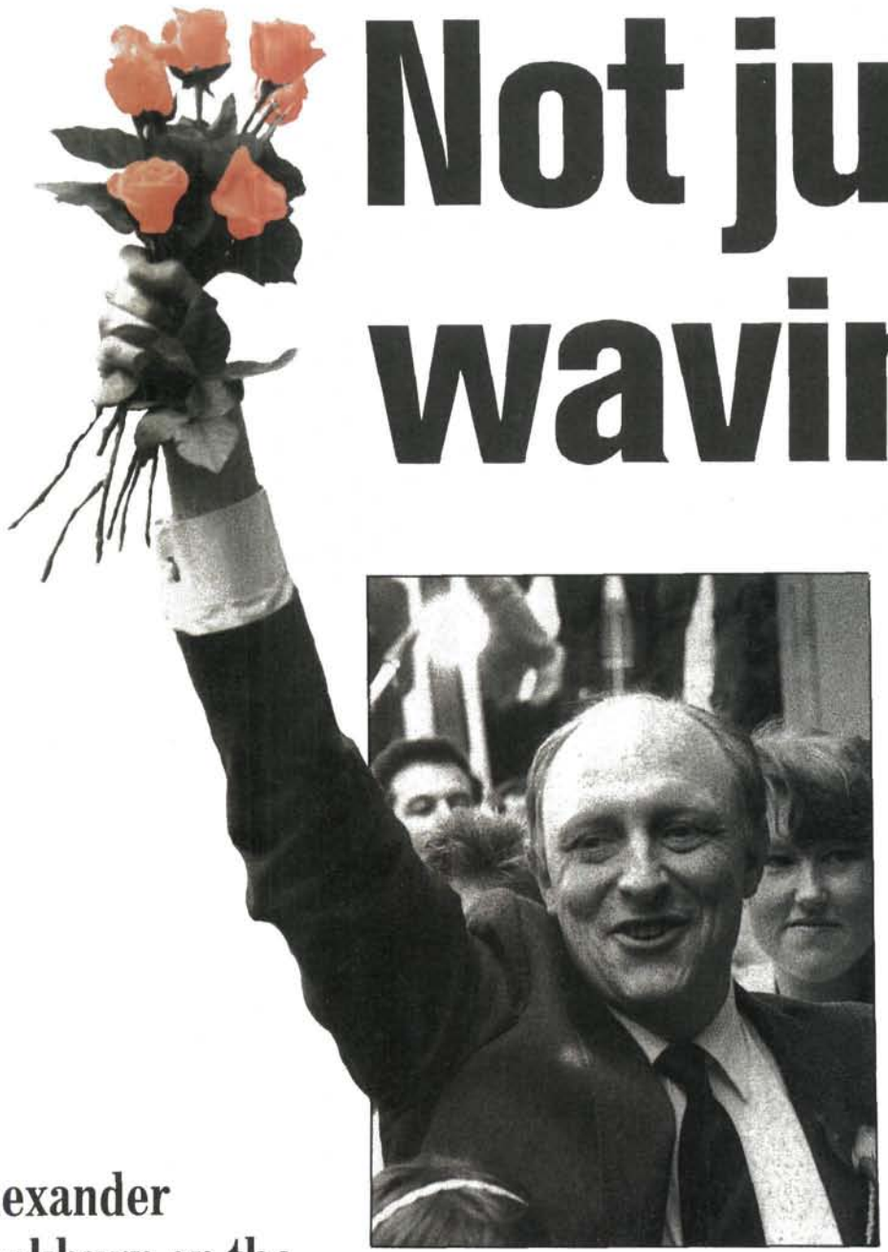

Not just waving...

...but drowning. Gordon Brown is admired, John Smith respected, Robin Cook feared, Neil Kinnock discounted by the Tories. Serious Labour MPs despair of Kinnock's leadership. How long can he survive?

Alexander Cockburn on the Dukakis campaign

Jacqueline Rose: Ruth Ellis and Margaret Thatcher, victim and executioner

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Flying Fish and Red Snapper, the perfect complement to a bottle of golden Cockspur Rum.

"When you're dining out in Barbados it's a good idea to sample the local delicacies.

Such as Flying Fish Creole, Kingfish Caprice, Caribbean Lobster, Red Snapper and, of course, golden Cockspur Rum.

Take a measure of pure Cockspur, add ice and a splash of lemonade and you have the perfect before-during-and-after-dinner drink.

As the mellow mixture slips down with the sunset, the conversation mingles with the sound of waves breaking on St. Lawrence Beach.

There's plenty of time to relax and enjoy the unhurried atmosphere.

In fact, by the time your starter arrives you'll probably be just about ready to order another round of golden Cockspur Rum!"

Nello Licorish,
Josef's Restaurant,
St. Lawrence, Christ Church,
Barbados.

If you like drinking you may like the taste of smooth Cockspur Rum.

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DIARY

Sean French

I've always thought it would be an interesting—if rather demanding—sociological exercise to trace back the course of a joke or of an urban legend of the "it happened to a friend" type to see if its source could be located. Perhaps the trail would be endlessly receding, each joke entropically created from an earlier one. Or perhaps, all the trails would converge in one mythological workshop at the North Pole, where little gnomes are engaged in making up Irish jokes or stories about alligators in the New York sewers and poodles in microwaves, and then releasing them into the world, like bacteria.

Most of us accept that jokes have a mysterious ancestry but what about gossip? Surely if you follow the traces of smoke back you will eventually reach some small fire. I had a chance to put this to the test last week on my return from holiday. When I phoned up the *NSS* office I was immediately congratulated on my marriage. It wasn't the mere untruth of this rumour that was dismaying but the assumption that lay behind it. To believe this my fellow workers also had to believe that I had married secretly and gone for my honeymoon on a hiking holiday in the mountains of Lapland with my two brothers. I was cruelly told that it was this that somehow made the rumour seem convincing. I can accept that I could be considered unromantic, but as unromantic as that?

I resolved to trace the rumour to its source. It reached the *NSS* office via a phonecall from someone claiming to be an old university friend of mine who asked if it were true. After a few enquiries this person turned out to be the brother of an old friend of mine. She had heard the rumour and was bemused that I hadn't told her, so she persuaded her brother to ring my place of work with an assumed voice and name.

She had heard the rumour from Nigella Lawson, the deputy literary editor at the *Sunday Times* which is my previous place of work. Apparently the critic Gilbert Adair had walked in there on some business or other and among other literary gossip had revealed that I was married.

What is curious about this—the point where my expedition has so far reached—is that I don't know Adair, I have never met or spoken to him. My only contact with him is that I reviewed a book he wrote called *Myths and Memories*. In the course of my review I pointed out that several of what Adair termed his memories were in reality inaccurate. Had Adair responded, he might have said that this didn't matter. He has been strongly influenced by the French semiologist, Roland Barthes. In Adair's own words Barthes saw French culture as "'coded': that which seemed evident was falsely so; what he perceived around him was a perpetual bombardment of signs and signals and messages, all of them requiring to be read."

Such thinking tends to emphasise the signifier and devalue, or even deny, what is signified. But if someone says that our culture is primarily composed of signs and myths, which have no necessary connection with reality, then why should we ever trust what he says. As Dr Johnson said of James Macpherson, "if he does really think that there is no distinction between virtue and vice, why, Sir, when he leaves our houses let us count our spoons."

I give this story at such self-indulgent length because I see it as an interesting test. It was a harmless rumour that was completely untrue, yet it was believed by everyone who heard it. What if the rumour hadn't been harmless?

I felt a tremor when I read an interview with Elton John in the current edition of *Q* magazine. In February of last year the *Sun* printed a story linking him with rent-boys. John immediately sued the paper for libel, claiming that the allegations were demonstrably false: "As soon as I announced I was going to sue, Mick Jagger rang me up. He said, Listen I've been through this kind of scandal—just leave it for two or three days and it'll be forgotten. In the long run it's not worth fighting because they'll try to rake up so much muck. I said, No, I'm going ahead. They can say I'm a fat old sod, they can say I'm an untalented bastard, they can call me a pouf, but they mustn't lie about me because then I'm going to fight. And I'm determined to be a winner."

Now John admits that Jagger was right. The *Sun* has been pursuing him for a year with a whole series of accusations, buying and publishing photographs from a man claiming to be an ex-lover. He sued again when it claimed he had had his dogs' voiceboxes removed. At one stage the campaign reduced John to a broken-down recluse and he's still got to face the trial.

If this is what happens to one of the richest performers in Britain when he is sure he has a cast-iron case against the *Sun*, there's not much chance for the rest of us.

One of the few things we wronged poor can do is write protesting letters. On my return I found in my mail a cross postcard from Ian Hamilton in response to the criticisms I made of his part in the dispute over his unauthorised biography of J D Salinger. At first I thought I would write a private letter in reply to Hamilton explaining my position. But since Hamilton himself has displayed little compunction in publishing the private correspondence of his subject, I decided I might as well reply in public. The card reads as follows:

Re. your pompous sermonette on Salinger.
(a) I don't feel "victimised".
(b) I don't believe JDS has a "responsibility" to supply anything to anyone. You'd know these things if you had read the book.

I've always been an admirer of Hamilton's caustic criticism (his *TLS* review of Stephen Spender's poetry a few years ago was a classic in the annals of venom), so it was interesting to find myself on the receiving end. His postcard to me is also an example of a phenomenon on which I've commented before, which is that no one is more sensitive to criticism than critics. Perhaps it's because it's only critics who think that what critics say matters.

To answer the points Hamilton makes. I haven't read the current version of the book but I read a copy of the original manuscript. However, the qualities of the book itself are peripheral to my argument which concerned the issues of doing the book at all.

As for his other cavils, I feel that the effect of his account of the legal battle has been to make Salinger seem the aggressor and Hamilton seem the unfortunate author, victim of his publisher, his subject and the legal system.

The irony of the whole affair is that Hamilton's previous biography was of Robert Lowell. Lowell lived exactly the public American writer's life that Salinger has shied away from. He took public political stands and used his private life —and private letters of his friends—as material for his poetry. American writers take public roles and commentators, including Hamilton, seem to have found it difficult to believe that Salinger doesn't want to be famous.

I suppose that what I really feel is that if my little comments disturbed Hamilton, how the hell does he think Salinger must have felt?

ROGER WODDIS

The man in Pollsmoor

This is a time for singing.
Let joy, not misery, be unconfined.
Only bodies can be kept in chains,
Not the heart and mind.

Seventy years and still intact.
Seventy years and defiant still.
You terrify them with your steadfastness.
They who worship violence, rule by terror,
Demand you renounce your dignity
And your unbroken will.

"Thank God, I have done my duty."
Another Nelson had reason to rejoice.
You have done your duty and more,
Stayed strong, your silence louder than their voice.

It is they who hammer at the bars,
Who live in fear, you who have the key.
Prisoners of madness, they cannot let you go
Till they release themselves.
Only the human are wholly free.

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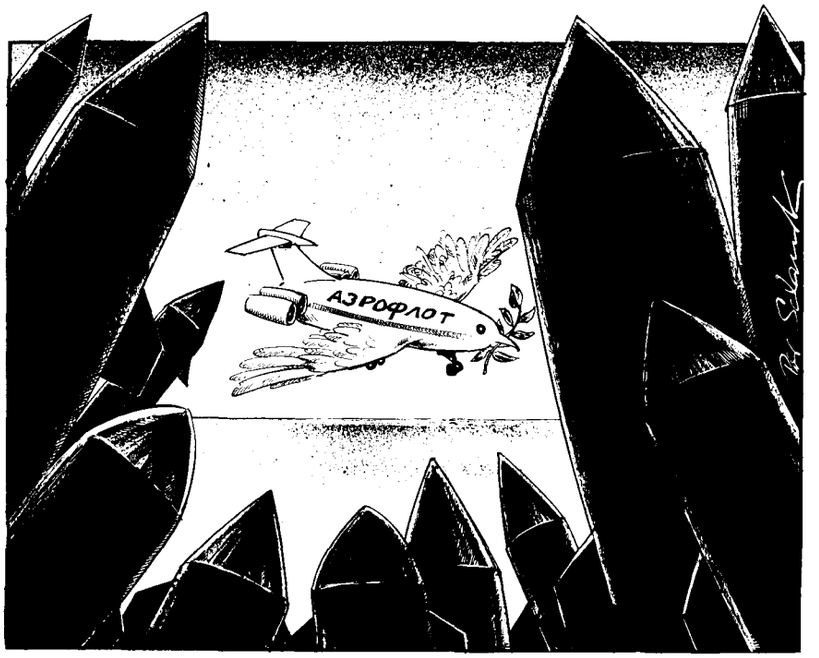
EDITORIAL

Glasnost at Greenham

William of Orange's invasion of Britain remains significant today. But perhaps less so than this week's Soviet invasion?



Peter Schrank

Complacency rules. After more than 40 years of dire warnings, the Russians finally came and no one made a fuss—indeed the tabloids scarcely *noticed*—perhaps because the British establishment was deep in the first throes of the long-planned celebration of another invasion which 300 years ago gave them a power over Britain they are now at last confident of enjoying for another 300 years.

You could scarcely have missed this celebration, but you may have missed a lesser one. Sir William Rees-Mogg, Keeper of the National Morals and a speculator in second-hand books, was 60 this week. No one else saw fit to celebrate the event in the public prints. So he did it himself on the editorial page of the *Independent*.

It was a personal testament which stood witness for a whole class. In 1948, the Third World War was a probability inside a few years as far as Rees-Mogg was concerned, but he decided to conduct his life on the basis that he would live to be 80. By 1958, the world seemed saner, but Britain was falling behind. The world of 1968 was riotous, but the 1960s were personally prosperous, joyous even. 1978 was a year of high inflation and bitter struggle and Britain was falling behind even faster. But the 1980s, the 1980s are superb, the 1980s are a time for born-again revivalism, and 1988 is a great year to reach 60.

Within less than 24 hours, Soviet forces had landed in Britain, exercising the right granted by President Reagan of the United States to inspect cruise missile sites in Britain. "Sovereignty," did you say? Britain *has* declined. 1988 is a great year, whether or not Rees-Mogg is 60.

The name of Greenham Common is world-famous. And it's a good name for England to give to the world. "Green" echoes nature's bounty. The abbreviation of hamlet suggests a natural human settlement and community. "Common" reinforces the sense of land shared and used by the people rather than owned by their lords and masters.

The Greenham Common women who surrounded and invaded the base were the forces of life against death. If cruise came, they said, they would stay until it went. Who believed them? The *New Statesman* was mocked for publishing lists of people arrested outside the airbase gates, and for publicising the abuses of liberties during Cruise-watch. But the protesters have been vindicated.

The women's movement argues that the personal is political. The Greenham women insisted on making the political personal. For men like Rees-Mogg, who personify the arrogance of influence, it is their own persons that are political. This they regard as their distinction, not to be shared with those of us outside the wire.

Rees-Mogg declares that the long night which darkened most of his own adult life is over. When he writes that "Britain has survived", he means *his* Britain—now rejuvenated by Japanese-style capitalism, union-bashing and welfare cuts, and released from the constraints of collective ideals. As it builds its own form of state power on the compromised heritage of the Glorious Revolution (in truth, a victory not for democracy or human rights, but for a mercantile oligarchy), busily engaged in rewriting school history books, computerising the poll tax and forcing the broadcasters into line, the British right is heading for its own crisis.

But it is, without doubt, the traditional left in Britain which is most discomforted. Less internationalist than the financiers, less nationalist than the Prime Minister, less democratic than the Liberals, less capable of change than the Kremlin, less multiracial than the American Democrats, the traditional left seems increasingly unable to address anything other than its own navel. And not kindly at that.

If *New Statesman and Society* has anything to do with it, the British left will begin to think again. It will not be easy and of course it will not be impersonal. But this week provides two starting points for real thought. The time has come both to challenge the complacent framework of 1688 and to argue for a radicalised democracy at home; and to accept the new international context, symbolised by the Soviets deciding at their leisure whether to surprise Molesworth or Greenham Common, and to work for a peaceful (and therefore democratic) settlement in Europe.

The Britain that Labour once believed in is gone. Rees-Mogg's will not last either. The challenge for the opposition parties and wider left now is to define the kind of place that we want within Europe in relation to a United States and Soviet Union which have given a new twist to the old English word "common".

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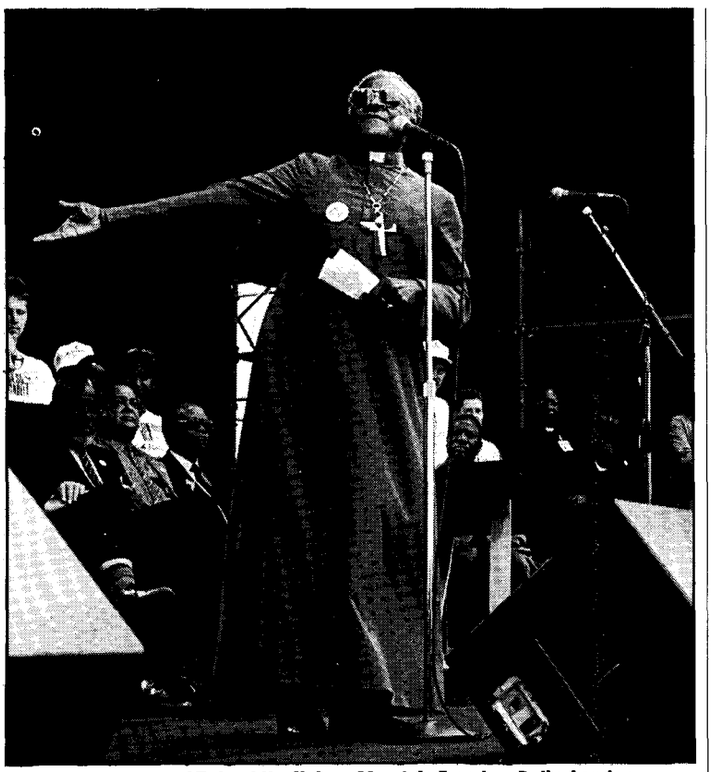

Andrew Moore/Reflex

Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the Nelson Mandela Freedom Rally, London

Victim of anti-apartheid speaks out

Rally against apartheid is the persistent plea of anti-apartheid movements worldwide; from pop concert to mass birthday celebrations for Nelson Mandela. The response is heartening.

But the justified outrage against Pretoria is affecting people whose stand against the system takes a great deal more moral courage than attending a rally in Western Europe.

Professor Michael Simpson, a South African psychiatrist, has found that his valuable anti-apartheid and human rights work has suffered because of his place of birth.

Visiting London last week to launch a new Channel 4 programme, *Apartheid: The State of the Mind* (Wednesday, 27 July at 11.10pm), which features his work on post-dramatic stress disorders in political detainees, the professor told of the problems he had on two occasions.

In October 1987, Professor Simpson flew into Britain for the autumn meeting of the Royal College of Psychiatry, of which he is a member. He had been invited to speak at the conference, but was banned from delivering his two lectures.

This week, Professor Simpson will be in New York attending a World Health Organisation-sponsored meeting on cancer where he will speak about cancer in black patients.

On this occasion the bursary, awarded to help cover the professor's costs, has now been withdrawn even though the money has been committed. The reason? He's a white South African.

These two incidents concern Professor Simpson: "I don't see how you can beat apartheid by becoming better at it. To treat everything South African as automatically bad is apartheid. I am so worried about this more recent decision of the WHO, because are we really going to say that because of the political situation in South Africa, deplorable though it is, to hell with all South African patients?"

The invitation to speak at last year's Royal College of Psychiatry conference was issued in April 1987. Yet it was not until his arrival in Britain that Professor Simpson was told by letter of the withdrawal of his two papers on AIDS in Africa and post dramatic stress disorders in political detainees. He was even moved to a hotel away from the other delegates.

At that conference, the other overseas guest speaker was Russian psychiatrist Dr Anatoly Koryagin. He was amazed to find that the kind of censorship he might expect in the USSR was practised in London.

Dr Jim Birley, President of the Royal College of Psychiatry said that the college simply felt that it was not "appropriate" for Professor Simpson to speak at the meeting.

"We had just passed a resolution not to allow South Africans to speak. I can see that it was a snub to Professor Simpson, but it was just bad timing. There hasn't been a complete ban on contacts with South Africa. People are free to attend our conferences and indeed our members travel to South Africa to give talks."

Dr Birley does however feel that "it is ironic that he [Professor Simpson] has been censored by people who are in fact highly critical of South Africa."

Professor Simpson agrees that the situation is very ironic, especially when he sees that "very senior members of the college council have felt perfectly free to travel around South Africa giving very unoriginal lectures well-paid for by the South African drug companies. That apparently causes no problems for college policy."

Born in South Africa, but of Scots descent, Professor Simpson is not impressed with the "theoretical" and "exhibitionistic" behaviour of some opponents of apartheid.

"One sees people doing things that are at best totally irrelevant to the situation in South Africa, but by gum it makes them feel better.

Any action against apartheid is to be applauded, but should be most carefully executed. As Professor Simpson points out: "If organisations continue to insist that no South African may speak abroad, it will be a foolish measure which will mainly silence the people whom the world should hear." *Sarah R Lowe*

Thatcher wants curb on EC power

Mrs Thatcher has ordered a study into how to check the march towards European federalism. Tory MPs are convinced that the Prime Minister is worried that the Single European Act and other legislation is threatening to carry Britain along the path to a fully integrated Europe which would lead to a serious loss of sovereignty.

This is seen as the main reason for the Prime Minister's rejection of a European Bank and EMS despite the support both have from the Chancellor, Nigel Lawson, and Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe. Her objection is not so much economic as political—the fear that Britain would be dominated by economically stronger EC partners, notably West Germany.

Even the re-appointment of Prof. Alan Walters, her monetarist guru, is seen as the start of the Prime Minister's defensive system being put into place.

Last week's shambles over the sale of Rover was further evidence of growing Commission powers. Lord Young, normally a champion of greater European co-operation, is said to have spluttered at what happened. Other strongly pro-Market ministers are becoming increasingly irritated by the advice of civil servants that they have no option on many important decisions but to follow EC directives.

MPs believe that the PM is now asking bluntly why she was not warned of the seriousness of the consequences of EC legislation. Legal experts are now advising that if you have the equivalent of a Supreme Court and pass powers to the EC Commission you build up a political momentum which is difficult to stop.

Mrs Thatcher's second question is believed to be: How do you stop the process? There appears to be little Britain can do. It takes seven years for the legislation to be enacted and at least as long to be unscrambled.

Not everyone is dismayed. Pro-marketeers are pleased at what they also recognise as a new tide in European affairs. Backbenchers have formed an all-party group on Europe which has Conservative MP Hugh Dykes as chair. Among the vice chairs are former Agriculture Minister, Michael Jopling and Labour front-bench foreign affairs spokesman, Donald Anderson. The first limited objective is to obtain access for Members of the European Parliament to Westminster, but the grand plan is to encourage a closer Europe, some of the group favour a federal Europe. Geoffrey Howe has welcomed the group. "There has long been a need for a group of this kind," he wrote. In her present state of mind, Mrs Thatcher will not be so enthusiastic. *John Lewis*

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Money link in oil rig safety

The entire safety system for North Sea oil installations has been called into question this week, in advance of the public enquiry into the disaster on the Piper Alpha platform.

Frank Doran, MP for Aberdeen South, has described as "shameful" the commercial arrangements for issuing safety clearance to oil rigs.

Each rig must be issued with a five-year "certificate of fitness-of-purpose" before it can become operational. This is a statutory requirement, but certificates are not issued by the government. They are granted by a certifying authority under contract to the oil company. There are six such authorities: Lloyd's Register of Shipping, the American Bureau of Shipping, the Offshore Certification Bureau, Germanissher Lloyd, Bureau Veritas, and Det Norske Veritas. In other words, an oil company can shop around for the best deal.

Doran expresses the problem for certifying authorities as a question. "Are you going to be as tough as you should be if you know that you might lose the contract after five years?" he asks. He adds: "There is the opportunity—and I know that it happens—to put on pressure over the award of contracts."

The Department of Energy has pronounced itself satisfied with the system. Lord Cullen, the enquiry chair, may take a different view. *James Stephenson*

Strikers petition High Court

The National Union of Seamen has been told to disown the entirely legal picketing by its Dover membership or face a "six-figure fine" in the High Court on Monday, 25 July.

This High Court instruction is the latest in a series of judgments by Justice Michael Davies which have further restricted the steps any trade union may take in a trade dispute.

In earlier judgments during the Dover strike over working practices on board P&O cross channel ferries, the same judge has granted injunctions banning sympathetic industrial action by seafarers outside Dover, and a ballot on national industrial action on safety and shift-working.

In May, Justice Davies, in a decision which raised legal eyebrows, refused to lift the sequestration order on NUS assests because he felt that the daily demonstration in support of the six pickets on the dock gates was "intimidatory". Yet such demonstrations are quite clearly legal. The police could have used their public order powers to deal with it if they felt it was not. In fact there have been very few arrests despite the anger of the sacked seafarers.

The 1980 Code of Practice on picketing lays out guidelines. But the law nowhere imposes a specific limit on the number of pickets and it certainly does not forbid demonstrations in support.

The present mood in Dover is not likely to please Justice Davies. Almost 1,000 of the sacked P&O strikers have signed a petition to the High Court making it plain that they "intend to continue" the daily demonstrations "whatever the High Court decides."

It is not clear what actions the High Court can take against the rank and file strikers in Dover, whose morale remains astonishingly high.

In any case we have not heard the last of the High Court's involvement in the Dover dispute. The strikers themselves are taking advice on whether they have a case against P&O. The company is operating a shift system far worse than a 24-hour shift pattern rejected by Townsend Thoresen on the same ferries during a dispute in 1985. TT told ACAS in 1986 that they "considered it undesirable for any person regularly to work 24-hours" because "the safety of the ship would be compromised."

The catalogue of safety problems identified by the NUS in recent weeks could yet prove a major obstacle for the company. In the wake of the oil rig tragedy, and with Herald of Free Enterprise heroes and heroines on the picket line, a High Court appearance on shoddy safety is about the last thing P&O wants. *Roger Kline*

Air experts slam US Gulf action

Radioed instructions from a US ship in the Gulf to a British Airways flight to Dubai almost resulted in a mid-air crash, an extraordinary session of the International Civil Aviation Organisation was told last week.

Frederick Neal, the British representative to the ICAO—the United Nations body supervising international air travel—told the meeting in Montreal of the near disaster. The pilot on flight 147 to Dubai received an urgent message from the USS Halyburton, ordering him to turn right 90 degrees. Only 25 minutes from Dubai, the pilot checked with the airport's air traffic control and was told to maintain his heading—a right turn at that moment could have caused a mid-air collision with another plane leaving a nearby airport.

The council was meeting to discuss the shooting down of Iran Air flight 655 by the US Navy cruiser Vincennes on 3 July. It has commissioned an independent investigation into the incident, which will report in September. It also recommended that civilian routes over the Gulf should be changed.

Although Iranian diplomats said international air transport routes cannot be altered to suit the whims of every American battleship commander, the flight from Bandar Abbas to Dubai has already been changed: the former 150-mile hop now makes a 500-mile detour over southern Iran.

Since 3 July, the Montreal-based International Federation of Airline Pilots' Associations (IFALPA) has received reports of two separate incidents of civilian planes diverting at the request of the US Navy. *David Schulze*

All quiet on the Irish terraces

If the British press has two archetypes for "men of violence" they are the English football fan and the Northern Ireland republican.

But the Irish Catholic nationalist needs a greater political motivation than a game of football before being stirred to the fight. No surprise then that the biggest threat of trouble among the thirty-thousand who sang the Irish national anthem at Sunday's Ulster Gaelic Football final came not at the game, but at RUC and British army checkpoints on the route to and from it. The game, the culmination of a competition between the Gaelic teams of the nine counties of Ulster (not the six counties of Northern Ireland) is northern nationalism's greatest annual sporting event.

It has long been the gripe of the Gaelic fan that police and military road blocks are spitefully erected on big match days. As the final is always held just South of the border in Clones, County Monaghan, where a "stop extradition" banner straddles the main street, a huge traffic build-up is guaranteed at crossing points such as Newtownbutler and Aughnacloy.

Last Sunday was no exception. The forces of the Crown were checking the registration plates of every vehicle—counting them all out and then back into the six counties. They were keen to prevent the cross-border traffic jam being used to smuggle people on their extensive wanted list from one jurisdiction to another.

Even wily motorists who sought to avoid the chaos by using the cratered, but negotiable, network of "unapproved" roads which criss-cross the county boundaries of Monaghan, Fermanagh and Tyrone encountered a heavy and thorough military presence.

Frayed tempers were cooled by the July gloom and frequent showers. But the weather had no such effect on the game itself. On the field, Monaghan narrowly defeated Tyrone in a blood and thunder, no quarter contemplated, seventy minutes of hard football. On the terraces and the famous hill banking the pitch, Gardai presence was negligible as the unsegregated blue and red hordes

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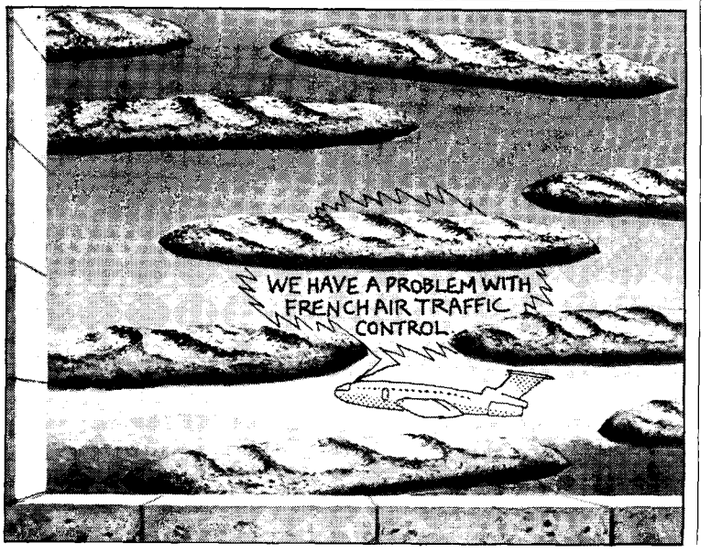

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roared on the game exchanging nothing more than verbal violence.

Tyrone fans are proud of the tag "the best behaved in Ireland" bestowed upon them by Dublin police chiefs in 1986. And Irish sports fans in general rejoice in their on and off the field betterment of England in last month's European soccer championships. The country, indeed, is awash with lurid green "Ireland 1 England 0" T-shirts.

Even when overcrowding appeared to bar ticket holders from Sunday's match, violence was easily averted. Rival fans simply helped each other to scale the walls of the ground or to reach tree-top vantage points. An American sports journalist, attending his first Gaelic match, marvelled at their "devotion" and the "purity" of the spectacle.

Sean O'Neill

THIS ENGLAND

£3 Book Tokens for entries printed. (Postcards please.)

●Angry Scots are spitting blood over an English newspaper's advertisement for homes at Culloden, scene of the 1745 rebellion's most famous battle.

The words, "Make a Second Killing at Culloden", were used by builders Wimpey in the *Sunday Times* to sell homes near the battlefield of Culloden Moor, where 3,000 Highlanders died during and after Bonnie Prince Charlie's battle with the Duke of Cumberland. — *Daily Mail* (George Moor)

●The £4 million government campaign may encourage people to experiment with drugs, says a report by the Policy Studies Institute.

"Girls have been going into chemists' shops and asking for the Heroin Screws You Up poster because the chap is so good-looking—they have been using him as a pin-up," Mr Colin Brown, a senior research fellow in charge of the report, said yesterday. — *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott)

●A colony of pigeons which has lived for generations at Torre Abbey, Torquay, is to be shot before a visit by the Queen and Prince Philip later this month, to help keep the site tidy. — *Daily Telegraph* (James Scott)

●A lorry driver who attempted to rape a woman after a New Year party was jailed for one month yesterday.

Judge Gabriel Hutton told Anthony Morris, aged 22: "I hope you will be able to keep your well-paid job and that the couple of weeks you spend in prison will be treated by your employers as part of your holidays." — *The Times* (Amanda Welles)

PARLIAMENT

Privatising politics

Sarah Benton

Last Wednesday was an ordinary old day in parliament. Bryan Gould attacked the unacceptable face of capitalism shortly after lunch, Anthony Beaumont-Darke spoke feelingly of its essentially moral base just before dinner and Newcastle's Mr Henderson followed him with an equally feeling exposition of class privilege. Meanwhile, the one-time symbol of the capitalist ruling class, the CBI, was attacked by various Conservative MPs for chronic whingeing and whining. What or whom do those MPs now represent?

Today sectors of parliamentary time, like much else that was political, are a commodity, to be bought and sold in the market of political advice. Some people haven't caught up with the drift of political privatisation which has flowed into the gap left by the formal ending of the corporate state. Where once the CBI had Whitehall's ear, and the state of capitalism was wrangled over in tripartite meetings, there are now countless parliamentary lobbyists, consultants and advisers. Indeed, the list of commercial companies which Tory MPs represent demands so many thousands of person-hours a year that it is quite astonishing that any of them have time to debate the morality of capitalism at all.

A member of the not-one-of-us CBI has noticed. Its one-time deputy director, Keith McDowell, sharply criticised the links between business and parliament in a full-page article in the *Evening Standard* this month. "It only takes a cursory glance at the official Westminster register of interests to discover the extent of politicians' paid links with industry and commerce," he wrote. His principal concern was the secret and valuable information filtered out to favoured companies by favoured business-men, young political advisers and civil servants who hardly have time to empty their briefcases before plonking themselves down at the board of some illustrious company or other.

This might be just sour grapes. But at least in an old-style corporate state there is a vague sense of accountability and social responsibility. Not so the modern parliament. And what also made Wednesday's debate on the Finance Bill interesting was that two Labour MPs, John Marek and Nick Brown, chose to come out with their complaints and name a few names.

It is through the Finance Bill that all the fine adjustments to the tax system are made. It is the detail of this that has created a growing industry of specialists who advise companies and rich individuals how to move their money and property around so they pay as little tax as possible. Through the right advice, a person earning one million pounds might, as Labour's Gordon Brown established, pay absolutely no tax at all. This was the report stage of the bill—after it's been to committee for various amendments which parliament then votes on.

According to Nick Brown, a member of the committee on the Finance Bill, he and the other new Labour members were shocked at the persistence of some Conservative MPs in pressing amendments which they were certainly not putting out of concern for their geographical constituents. Among those they named were Bowen Wells, who had quite properly declared his interest as a consultant to International Distillers and Vintners Ltd. He is also a consultant for Geest industries and the Hawley group (as was). Brown also named Sir Marcus Fox, whose entry in the *Times Guide to the House of Commons* (the one that Ministers and the Speaker read in boring moments) is user-friendly vague about his commercial interests. In fact, he is a director with fellow MP Keith Speed of Westminster Communications Ltd which promises "a high level of consultancy and advice in the public affairs field."

Such companies are quite popular amongst MPs, as are private health care firms (the former health minister Dr Gerrard Vaughan is director of several). Who exactly do Conservative MPs with such connections represent? Indeed, what do they see their primary job as being? It is a question one might put to Harrow East's MP Hugh Dykes. He owns a video and electronics investment firm called ADA Video Systems and faithfully fills in his occupation on its annual return as company director.

Nick Brown told parliament he was going to refer the issue to the Select Committee on Privileges. He has found he cannot do that. The committee has not met since the general election. It might have been discussed at the Select Committee on Members' Interests. It won't be. The select committee has already rejected Graham Allen's proposal that it should. Its chairman, Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, lists his interests as London Weekend Television (Holdings) Ltd, Brands Hatch Leisure plc, Taylor Laden Ltd, Glengate Holdings Ltd, MDA (Benelux) SA, Eagle Star Group, Philips Business Systems. I'm not suggesting for a moment that he would allow his interests to influence his judgment, but they make it hard for him to look as impartial as he might.

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OBITUARY

The girl who never made it

Barbara Wootton, the socialist and social reformer, died last week. Tony Gould writes a personal memoir

My copy of Barbara Wootton's autobiography, *In a World I Never Made*, is inscribed: "With love from The Girl Who Never Made It". This might seem a surprisingly modest self-assessment from a woman who had been, among other things, a university professor, a governor of the BBC, a member of four royal commissions, a JP for almost half a century, the first woman to sit on the Woolsack as a Deputy Speaker in the House of Lords, a broadcaster and an author both of fiction (stories and a novel) and of several major works in the social sciences. But of course it had nothing to do with modesty—Barbara did not hide her light under a bushel—rather the reverse: she was making a joke about the way the Americans had misread the title of her book.

Socialists are supposed to lack humour—that is the prerogative of the right. But Barbara, whose socialism, if not her sense of justice, perhaps got a little diluted in old age, was always an amusing companion. Her writing style, heavy with the classical influence of her childhood (both her parents were classical scholars), can be rather magisterial, but it is never humourless. There are sentences in the autobiography that still make me laugh when I come upon them: for example, "I was attracted to several men, and several men were attracted to me; but the two categories, though overlapping, were not co-terminous..." I cannot think of anyone other than Barbara who would put it quite like that.

Her style might be labelled circumlocutory but she could be pithy when occasion demanded, as, for instance, when she writes of her brief first world war marriage to Jack Wootton: "...a day and a half after our marriage, I saw him off from Victoria along with a train load of other cannon fodder". Five weeks later Jack was dead and she writes, "in due course his blood-stained kit was punctiliously returned to me". The use of "punctiliously" in that context says it all.

Barbara was already an octogenarian when I first met her, and I was half her age. We began to meet regularly for lunch, always in the House of Lords, as she had difficulty in getting about outside. We took it in turns to pay—equality in this as in other things—and Barbara pretended to keep strict account of whose turn it was; and in this she was not entirely joking. Money mattered. Her own probity was such that she renounced the widow's pension she had been awarded on Jack's death, "being unable to see any justification for a young, able-bodied and childless woman such as myself being subsidised at the taxpayer's expense".

Camera Press

Barbara's second marriage, in the mid-1930s, to George Wright introduced her to "press persecution". It was good tabloid material of the "bluestocking marries a taxi-driver" sort: "That George had already been awarded a full-time scholarship at the LSE made no difference: he was a 'cabby' and I was a 'don', so together we were news." In many ways it was a successful marriage, though George did leave her in the end to live with another woman, who had his children. Barbara said without rancour that he was "a natural polygamist". But she deeply regretted having no children of her own.

The fact that she was not cocooned in family life, however, probably made her a more caring friend and there were certainly a few younger men, myself among them, with whom she enjoyed a semi-maternal, semi-flirtatious relationship. Until two or three years ago, when the senility she had feared for years began to undermine not just her life, which was bad enough, but her work, which was truly her life, Barbara was quite amazingly open to any sort of conversation. She was both interest*ing* and interest*ed*, the latter a rarer characteristic among the great and the good.

Despite the obstacles she had had to surmount as a pioneer intellectual woman making her way in a man's world, Barbara was ambivalent about present-day feminism. She was inclined to be contemptuous of the contemporary obsession with women's this and women's that and felt, as others have done when the trail they blazed has gone on past them, that this was not what she had meant at all. She enjoyed telling stories from her own experience which illustrated the absurdities of sexual inequality, whether it was acquiring a first class honours degree with distinction at Cambridge, yet not being allowed to put the magic letters BA after her name; or having to give her economics lectures under a man's name because she, as a "non-member of the university", was not allowed to lecture in her own right. But her favourite story (and mine) illustrates how this inequality could sometimes work in the woman's favour. Between the wars she went on a lecture tour of the United States with George:

"Before leaving, we went to get the income tax clearance required of all parting visitors by the US government, and took up our positions side by side before the appropriate official. All the conversation was, of course, addressed to George, with the little woman sitting quietly by.

'You have been here on vacation, Mr Wright?' 'Yes', said George, truthfully. 'And have you had a good time?' 'Yes', repeated George, with mounting enthusiasm. Then—in very sceptical tones—came the final question: 'I don't suppose you've earned any money?' 'No', said the still completely truthful George.

Although I did not expect to be spoken to directly I would still have owned up, had the question 'Did your wife earn any money?' been put. But chattels, I thought to myself, are entitled to be chattels. So home we came with the money..."

Barbara maintained that it was a fallacy that people grew nicer as they grew older; in her view, they grew more like themselves, with the implication that, in her own case, that was not a good thing. She was too forceful a character in the mould of her mother, whom she had never liked, to be at ease with herself. Fortunately, though, she had also had a nanny and, as she wrote in a late book review, "the lack of affection between my mother and myself was largely compensated for by the mutual devotion of myself and my nanny". As the autobiography makes clear, Barbara adored her donkeys (and was very sad when she grew too old to keep them) and she adored her nanny, who was nicknamed "the Pie".

She tells us, "The Pie lived to be 91 and was buried on the same day as John Foster Dulles—a coincidence which provoked much reflection as to the sources of human fame and the qualities of human greatness."

It is a pleasant coincidence to think that Barbara, too, lived to be 91.

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The vicious art of croquet

Amanda Mitchison looks for malice and thorny bushes at the Hurlingham croquet championships

A torrible prospect of grey sky, grey green lawns, gribbling rain and not a free drop to drink, despite sponsorship from Carlsberg. From a distance Hurlingham looks like a bad Dantesque joke specially for the English —a circle of hell where tiny little white chefs are condemned to stir eternally a sea of pea soup with outsized, heavy spoons.

The only ray of light comes from Bryan Sykes, a genetic engineer from Oxford, who twiddles a mallet with ends that look as if they have been dipped in molten copper. In fact the hitting edges are coated in copper-coloured cellulose lacquer finish. Just to prove it, Bryan has the spray can in his bag.

For metal ended mallets are prohibited. They give an unfair advantage—which is just what Bryan needs because he isn't very good. According to one of his friends(?) he is "a Coventry City of croquet" with "random bad shots" punctuating his play but making him a tooth sucking delight to watch.

Likewise Bryan's Oxford half blue—crossed mallets *rampant* on a frayed cricket jumper—is an endearingly washed out affair. Here Bryan deprecates on his own behalf: "Well it was the year they were giving blues for everything. Croquet sneaked in with ballroom dancing. And it was only because Colin's girlfriend's flatmate was going out with the president of the Blues Committee..."

Bryan and his partner Ian Bond are playing against "the twins", a seeded computer man and an assistant ombudsman who co-authored an exhaustive manual on croquet strategy. Theirs is a cautious, stolid, po-faced, breeze sniffing sort of game. Predictably they have the seats in the marquee out of the rain and are safely on the far side away from the bar. Sheltering nearby is Caradoc, a stuffed green dragon who (appropriately for a croquet player's mascot) possesses a large cranium, a sizeable paunch and a quantity of sharp back biting teeth. Curled up in another corner is a green Mackintosh worm who serves as an overcoat for the ombudsman's mallet. For the ombudsman is just that type: he can probably tell the time by the grass friction and the speed of the balls. Bryan says wearily, "Sometimes you can bore your opponents into submission. But not these two."

Phillip Polglaze

Bryan gilding the lily

Bryan asks, "Have we ever won? When did we last win Ian? Oh we did have one very good year back in... was it '81? I believe we won a game then." Against all odds, they are hoping that the twins will play badly, "but the trouble is that we bring out the best in our opponents."

As the computer man approaches his next shot, Bryan says quietly, "he deserves to miss for once. If he hits this we've had it." The computer man creeps back from the ball, scowls, creeps forwards again, (this is called "stalking") realigns himself, bends over at right angles, swings his mallet back and forth rocking on his toes and finally, when his body is poised as still as a mantis, he hits the ball diagonally right across the court.

As the ball rolls across Bryan gives vent to the kind of strangled squeal you would expect from Caradoc if he got stuck crawling through a hoop. The ball misses, reawakening Bryan's blind faith: "We're going to lose this game, but just when we've got a feel for the lawn. I always like to lose the first game. It's all psychological—the opponents get overconfident so you can hammer them in the second game. By the third game it will be dark and hopefully absolutely pouring. Then they will be demoralised, so we will win."

Bryan and Ian return to the court to consult on who will take the next shot. Bryan wins and returns to his damp bench while Ian starts stalking. The rain squirts gently into the beer glasses. I ask the inevitable question: "Do you *enjoy* croquet?"

"No not at the time. Though I think I remember enjoying it in '81." He casts his eyes over the pea soup. "It's played in a lot of nice places. I just come for the parties. If you were here last year you could have wangled yourself into Fiona's 21st up in the club house."

Croquet has always had great losers. Financial—you have to win both the singles and the doubles to recoup the entrance fee to Hurlingham. Political—just before the 1983 elections nearly all the contestants at the Harrow weekend said they were SDP or Liberal supporters. Croquetic—the Napoleons of the sport are many. Here are three:

John Solomon, one of England's greatest croquet players, but now on permanent sabbatical from serious croquet. He has been gravely afflicted with twitchers and hoopitis. "If I found myself six inches in front of my hoop I *knew* I was going to go straight into the wire...my wrist would give some unexplainable twist ...my nerve had really gone."

Spencer Ell lost both arms at Loos in 1915 and played with a hook-like extension to his stump. He was a brilliant player, able to remove and attach clips from the sides of hoops with his feet. He resigned from croquet in disgust after an opponent complained that his gadget gave him the unfair advantage of extra swing.

Walter Jones Whitmore (né Walter Whitmore Jones), author of the seminal *Croquet Tactics*, and the first English champion—he organised the open tournament in Evesham in 1867 and won probably because he hardly advertised it at all. He invented *The Imperial Chinese Game of Frogs and Toads* and unscrupulously claimed that *Squails*, *Hard Lines* and *Mangola* were also his. Jones Whitmore's life-works also include a patent croquet stand, a bootlace winder and many

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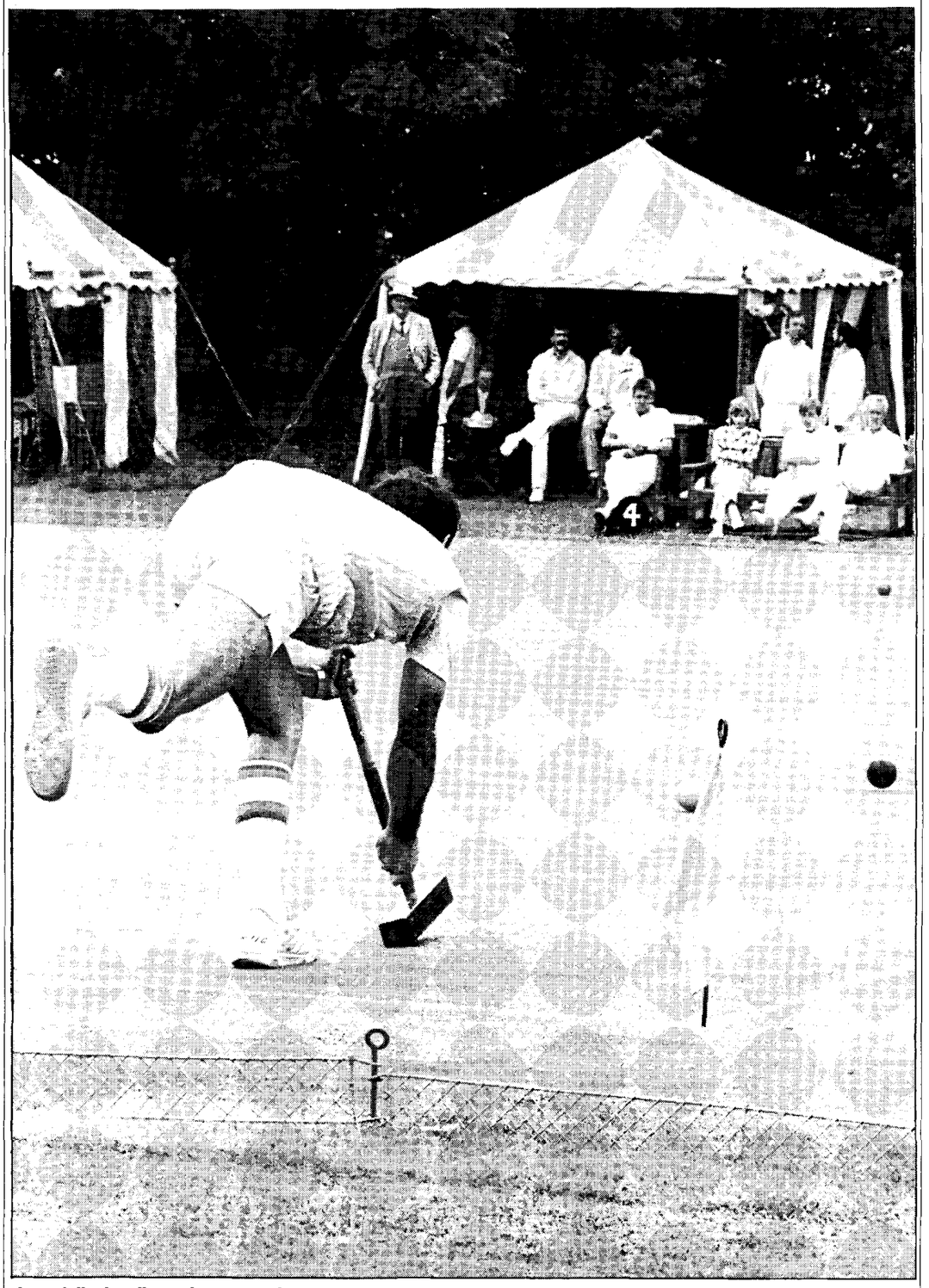
remarkably bad poems written on skyblue paper.

In 1872 Dr Richard Prior wrote in his *Notes on Croquet* that "nothing but tobacco smoking has ever spread as quickly" as the new game. Croquet was considered erotic because it allowed women to show off their ankles. (In those days players could place one foot on their own ball when making a croquet). Boston city banned the game and at Eglinton Castle, in Ayrshire, lady players were requested to wear red boots.

Championship croquet has lost these and many other pleasures of the old amateur sport. The disappearance of the crinoline has made scuffling balls about underneath it impossible. The regulation that players stay off the court when their opponents are playing puts a stop to conversation and distracting interjections. And the municipal gravel court borders which have replaced traditional thorny bushes and rosehips diminish the pleasure of croqueting an opponent's ball off the court.

Here I must confess an interest—I have played the home-hearth rosehip version of croquet since childhood and what I have always lacked in ability, I have tried to make up for in malice. I knew that really clever croquet was abstruse and anticipatory like chess, but I was shocked by Hurlingham.

"The traditional viciousness of croquet has moved off the court among the spectators"



Long delicate rolls can be pure poetry

Some of the individual strokes—beautiful hard splicing motions, jumps, long delicate rolls—are of course pure poetry. But in the name of strategy, the experts have turned the game on its head and taken its guts out. They begin a match by hitting their balls as far away from the first hoop as possible. Then they spend most of the rest of the time realigning their positions, and only bothering to go through the hoops if they can do three or four in one go. The croquetspeak is even worse—they talk of "leaves" and "going for four". Even their explanations are incomprehensible: "A sextuple peel? Oh that's a bit like doing three one for sevens."

The traditional viciousness of croquet has moved off the court among the spectators, who are usually fellow players and who gossip cruelly. At Hurlingham they whiled the hours away reminiscing about last year's "super newt" (croquet with half a pint at every hoop) and dropping peanuts into their beer to watch them rise. They were the first to suggest (rightly) that croquet was "like watching paint dry". Despite the recent hype about "the game which combines the tactical brilliance of snooker with the drama of bowls," croquet would make rotten television.

But for those who don't play, the game has still greater miseries to offer. On the very far side of the courts, beneath the sycamores, a little pair of white shoes and white stockinged legs moved back and forth fretfully. They belonged to a "croquet widow", the wife of one of the visiting American players.

And it is the Americans who have brought one real pleasure to Hurlingham. They let us thrash them. (The peanut throwers: "We no longer fall over laughing about the Americans' croquet—we just grin.")

There are millions of Japanese playing a similar hoop and mallet game, and a couple of schoolboys from Blackburn are such good shots at croquet that they haven't bothered to learn the finer points of tactics. (Famous maxim: "It's possible to play croquet so well you don't enjoy it.") This has led to dark remarks about black pudding and raw fish taking over from cucumber sandwiches. But Britain (excepting New Zealand) still rules the waves when it comes to croquet. But then it would have to be croquet, wouldn't it? No doubt we also lead the the world at *Squails*, *Mangola*, and *Shove H'penny*.

Croqueting: after a player hits another ball he can bring the two together and hit them again. This move is the essence of the game and allows the player to turn and move his opponent where he wishes.

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A leader too far

Arithmetic says that Neil Kinnock will survive as Labour leader till the next election. But, argues Edward Pearce, psychology says he won't

Reflex

It is a truth universally agreed that a party possessed of a series of electoral defeats must be in need of a leader. Quite how Jane Austen would have continued *Walworth Road*, subtitled "Humility and Humiliation", can only be guessed at.

However, it can be taken that the present leader of the Labour Party has returned from an unhappy trip to Africa to exist in a condition of interim hopeful tolerance. He is not thought to be naturally secure in the job or to be doing it well. He is there because the rules appear to cement him in; because the Labour Party on the nightmare road betwen Bishop's Stortford and Wembley, gave itself a constitution which appears to confer much of the generous tenure associated with the Papacy. Whether Neil Kinnock can be described, *pace* Leo X, to be enjoying himself is another matter.

We are told by people who understand these things that no matter what goes wrong, however many Question Times up against Mrs Thatcher are botched, whether or not the ten thousand men are led up to the top of the hill and down it on defence until they indeed feel neither up nor down, the leader is the leader, the block vote, like the force, is with him and nothing can be done about it.

As a doctrine, it is a bit like the words of the Earl of Manchester, the first, hesitant, commander of the parliamentary forces in the Civil War: "If we beat the king ninety and nine times yet is he king still. But if he beat us the once then we are all hanged men."

The truth is that Labour's new constitution is a terrible mess and acknowledged to be a terrible mess on all sides. It was conceived, remember, at the apogee of left strength as a means of making war on the parliamentary party. I always used to feel, watching the MPs on their special stand at conference, that they looked horribly like the *Premier Etat*, the hapless nobility of France assembled in 1789, lonely men, the object of too much hostile gesticulating attention but set aside, nominally in honour, actually for early berths on a balloon about to go up.

In calmer, post-traumatic times, it becomes apparent that the parliamentary party has the edge as a constituency over the local parties and the trade union movement, even if these could ever be scrupulously represented. It is expert in the one thing which actually matters about a *parliamentary* leader—whether he is effective as a leader.

It is fashionable to deride parliament, to stress the authoritarian powers of the executive, the futility of so much legislative activity. But what parliament is for sure is a wind tunnel. It is the only testing ground which matters for ideas and for people in politics. A foolish notion can indeed be legislated through, like the poll tax, but if it passes on the say-so of the Whips and in the teeth of rational debate, the prospects of it injuring the promoters correspondingly expand. The position of individuals is much more clearcut. You cannot fail in the Commons and succeed in politics. Inept figures brought in from outside, in the way of John Davies for the Conservatives and Frank Cousins for Labour failed, and were seen to fail. No amount of TV debate on the government's recent benefits re-jig would have struck the blow against both it and the presiding minister that a three-hour debate did. John Moore was very nearly wiped out as a political entity in an afternoon by a session in the old talking shop.

If Neil Kinnock is deemed to be failing by his parliamentary colleagues, then he is failing. And indeed that is the general verdict. Not only has there been the dismal result of the *Sunday Times* poll of MPs, but direct experience confirms it. The criticism was being voiced long ago by the usual people with grudges and axes (for grinding or burying in heads). You discount that. But what began to emerge long before Denzil Davies pulled the pin out of his Mills bomb, was the exasperation of high-quality MPs of serious purpose—and notably among the new intake.

These are not malcontents. They want the Labour Party in business and it was their judgment that the leader was simply not up to it. He lost too many conflicts in the House, whether major debates or the twice-weekly Question Time bout. It was a revelation, by the way, to hear Roy Hattersley twice put Mrs Thatcher on the canvas last week. He did so by angling a characteristic piece of information, truffled for by the great Dave Hill, exactly in the interrogative mood and by keeping it short. (Dave Hill is Roy Hattersley's research assistant, like Barkis, ever willin'.) There are few things better for Labour morale than the sight of Mrs Thatcher repeating a statistic three times in two minutes like an invocation against the evil eye.

Systematically, though, MPs had seen Kinnock muff these encounters and the bigger ones. They had become familiar with the excess of jokes, the triple adjectives ("This is terrible, awful, grotesque"), the shortage of factual grist and the habit of carrying rally-platform assertion and style into the Commons.

Moreover, when Neil Kinnock gave his interview on defence to the *Independent* it was as if every suppressed instinct of despair suddenly escaped. The Commons being that sort of place,

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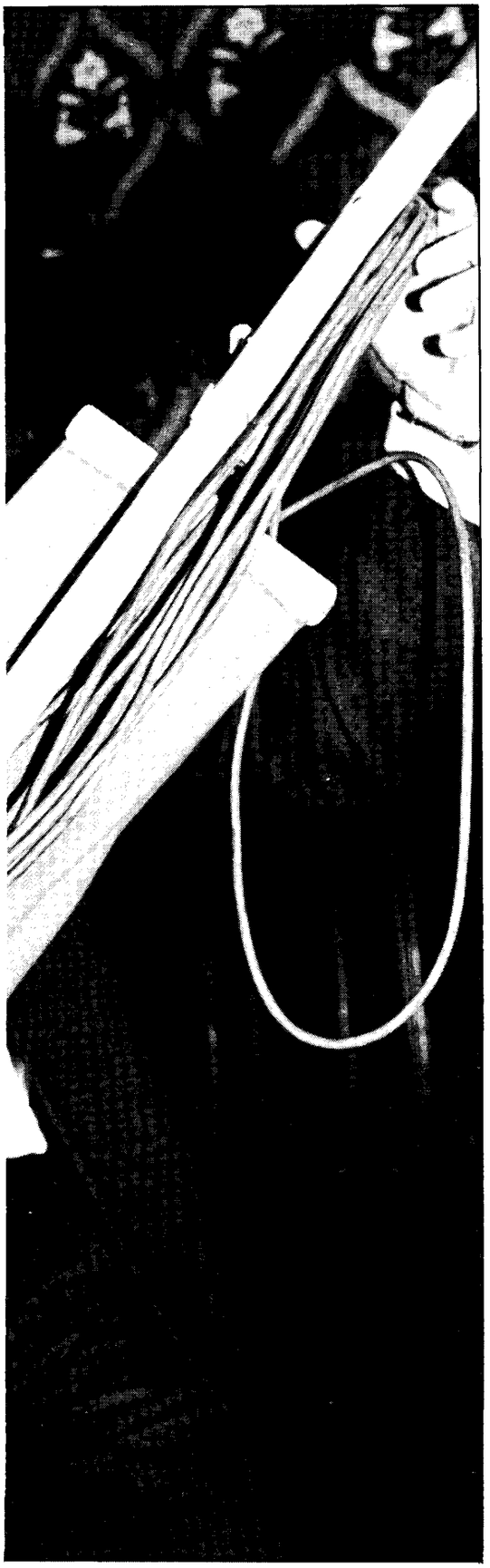

the Conservatives are now very well informed of Labour feeling towards its leader. Equally, it has not escaped Kinnock's critics that the Tories are coming to value him. Man for man, the Labour front bench has a slight edge on the government, allowing for the inevitable superiority conferred by back-up on any government. Gordon Brown is admired, John Smith respected, Robin Cook feared, Neil Kinnock discounted.

That is cruel and sad for a brave individual, but the Commons is a place of free exchange where talent is weighed differently to its political colour.

So how does this ride with the Earl of Manchester theory of Labour leadership? This theory is also, of course, the one best expressed by Peter Kellner in the *Independent*. For the broad judgment of Peter I have bottomless respect, and of course mathematically he is right. If one submitted a better candidate than Neil Kinnock to election against him through the process of the electoral college here and now, the attempt would fail. But we are not just talking mathematics. Peter's mathematics are right, but he omits the factor of psychology.

They want the Labour Party in business and it was their judgment that the leader was simply not up to it

The leader chosen and protected by the electoral college may belong to the three estates of the Labour party in terms of weighted parcels of votes, but it is with the parliamentary party that he must live his political life, spend nineteen-twentieths of his time and whose confidence he must retain. Voters and MPs, MPs and voters, they alone really matter. More precisely, he needs their goodwill and that of the voting electorate. If he loses both for more than a momentary spasm, his long continuation as leader becomes impossible. As the machinery of formal leadership sweeps him off to foreign visits and the sweet relief of para-statesmanship the message has to be that none of this simulation actually matters.

Life isn't just meeting Kenneth Kaunda. Nor is it just a matter of addressing rallies of the faithful. One of the most exasperating features of the last election was the bumper rally to which door-knocking active members were swept uselessly by the coachload to a local city to hear a morale-raising oration from the leader. Neil Kinnock, with his taste for long, old-fashioned, shouted speeches and platform empathy, has a weakness for this sort of gala cosy, and a lot of good it does him.

If that is all the constituency activists have to go on, then they are simply not placed to form a coherent judgment of a leader or a potential leader. Whether the electorate is more expert doesn't matter. The electorate is the guardian of life and death, the custodian of the guillotine. Lose them and you lose the election. The MPs matter because they are constant daily witnesses to a leader and his rivals' abilities. They are familiar with that wind tunnel. Impose on them an artificially prolonged leadership in whose competence they do not believe and you will get demoralisation, a disbelief in the function of opposition.

The government, let us remind ourselves, is currently getting away with murder and knows it. The poll tax, the great three-decker club sandwich of the education bill, the assault on the green belt, the scrag end of privatisation, the disgraceful Official Secrets substitution bill with its array of absolute offences, are all of them pieces of violently contentious legislation. Yet who truly has heard the opposition and remembers what they say? How many times in this twelve-month parliament, apart from the benefits re-jig riot, has a government minister had to sweat?

The secret of good opposition lies in winning arguments and harrying at key points. Filibusters are commonly useless, big bombastic speeches worse than useless. We see a lot of both. But the actual front bench team is intelligent and able to make a good case. If their leader, however, is cherished by the government, if he wastes his speeches and loses his encounters with the Prime Minister, if serious non-malcontent MPs well up with despair, how can any constitution or collegiate system sustain him long?

Neil Kinnock is described as being on probation. More precisely, he is suspended between the critical and chronic stages of a grim condition. If the full collegiate armoury is drawn up on his behalf when serious challenge comes, he will survive only as a political Struldbrugge, someone condemned to perpetual life beyond the body and mind's ability to function. The logic of a nice mathematical adhesion to the college is perfectly struldbruggian, a cruel prolongation of exhausted life.

Answers to such problems have to be found, and in the way of politics which evolves beyond the printed page of a constitution, they will be. They will begin with the removal of a chief whip who is a personal lieutenant. Also one hears that knives are out for Peter Mandelson, the party's public relations chief (sadly, since in most ways he is a good thing), simply as a vicarious Kinnock figure, a way of getting at him.

The erection recently of a 20 per cent barrier of underwriting MPs before a candidacy may be mounted, is a gift to the critics since once a challenge does come, the declaration of that fifth or better of the parliamentary party will be its own momentum, a designer vote of heavily diminished confidence. In a thousand ways the message can be got across within parliament that a leadership isn't working. But it will be a miserable, spiteful, depressing business which Neil Kinnock doesn't, as a human being, deserve.

Realistically, as a parliamentarian working in parliament he will, unless he can make some mighty change in his fortunes, come to understand the artificiality of his position before the debilitation goes too far. He will also hopefully understand from Conservative examples the two sorts of career which are open to departing leaders, the fulfilment enjoyed by Alec Douglas-Home and the desolation of Edward Heath. Leadership is more complex than arithmetic and ultimately leaders know it. ●

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A freakish geometry

Associated Press

Alexander Cockburn on the real message of Atlanta

In the foreshortened perspective of the experts, everything went more or less smoothly at the Democratic Convention in Atlanta, which does not alter the fact that everything already wrong when Michael Dukakis chose Lloyd Bentsen to be his running-mate is still going wrong. It would be a foolish Democrat who predicted easy victory or even victory at all in the election in November.

Flanked by "moderation" and liberalism, in the larger persons of Bentsen and Jesse Jackson, Dukakis, who loathes constituency politics, even brought himself to say the word "coalition", proclaiming that Jackson was an important part of same. And the Hollywood producers who were paid nearly a million dollars to produce the event created an idiom of wholesome middle America, and prairie populism centred on mephitic denounciation of bankers and eastern money. (The climax of Monday night, a moment of gruesome horror, had the homespun sentimentalist Garrison Keilor atop the podium leading a bunch of children in the oath of allegiance.)

The rhetoric was traditional and non-contentious and it was only after listening carefully through hours of platitude that I realised the magnitude of two of the problems facing the Democrats. Though the idiom of convention oratory is inherently tilted towards use of the superlative, no one seemed able to think of anything exuberant to say about either Michael Dukakis or Lloyd Bentsen. Even Jimmy Carter, who once hailed Ferdinand Marcos as a "beacon of democracy", and who can hoof his way through the honorifics with the best of them, failed at this task, though he had fine things to say about Jackson. And the reason for such failure is not hard to find. It is next to impossible to stampede a convention with the news that the "next President of the United States" is . . . *competent* and has successfully *balanced* the *budget* of the great state of Massachusetts on a number of occasions.

With Bentsen the problem is different. There are many things one could say about the senior senator from Texas, but an assembly devoted to the promotion of unity in the Democratic Party is probably not the place to indulge in frankness. Of course, his selection has the professionals and all of pragmatic kidney ecstatic, as such people always are in the presence of transparently vulgar acts of political calculation. Newspaper columnists, whose idea of heaven at election time is two entirely identical candidates, hailed a bold act of ticket balancing, in which the steel of Dukakis liberalism is tempered with the mature moderation of the Texan.

It is, indeed, true that Dukakis had to find someone from the south, south-west or west; true also that Texas and California are crucial in the arithmetic of the electoral college. The parallel Dukakis's strategists were eager to make was naturally that of the Massachusetts senator, John F Kennedy's choice of Texan senator Lyndon Johnson as his running mate in 1960. Actually, Robert Kennedy used to say that they asked Johnson to accept the vice-presidential nomination in the confident hope that he would refuse it and were stunned when he accepted. But this aside, the Democratic Party of 1960 had not yet been changed by the Voting Rights Act signed by President Johnson that made possible the candidacy of Jesse Jackson and the selection of 1,300 Jackson delegates. John Kennedy did not have to deal with the Democratic Party of 1988 and a rival in the form of a black man who ended the primary season having won more votes than anyone else among people under 45, and particularly under 30—which, as Jackson constantly emphasises, is "the future of our party".

So what did Dukakis achieve by choosing Bentsen? In the first place, by the belated manner in which Jackson learned from a journalist of the choice, Dukakis infuriated Jackson's supporters, who will be crucial to any Democratic success. The slight should not be underestimated. Jackson is the first American politician in many years who has aroused the poor, and particularly the black, to any degree of enthusiasm for the electoral process. Indeed, he has raised their expectations to levels impossible to realise within the terms of the present political system and (come to that) the present political philosophy of Jackson himself. And just as Jackson himself had said, his supporters reckoned he deserved—had earned—serious consideration for the vice-presidential spot.

Dukakis never had the remotest intention of offering him any such thing. More reason then to make the theatre of considering Jackson all the more convincing, not in cynicism but as an act of political good manners. Instead of which Jackson was given a slap in the face; and the

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nomination went to someone as far from the ideals of the Jackson constituency as it is possible to be.

Bentsen's political profile is not alluring to liberals. He is one of a small group of Democratic senators urging continued support for Jonas Savimbi and UNITA. He has been a supporter of aid to the contras. Few Democratic senators have voted more consistently with President Reagan in the past eight years. He is a protectionist and has voted for the MX missile, the death penalty, and school prayer.

Few senators have received more corporate support. Between 1972 and 1987 he ranked fourth in the US Congress in the amount of money received from the political action committee of these corporations and their lobbyists and in the first six months of last year he led the list. Above all, he has been the exponent of the interest of the oil industry. His conservatism is not something discovered with the dignified afternoon of his years. His most famous political victory came in the sixties with a savage primary fight against the famous Texan liberal senator Ralph Yarborough, and in an even earlier race back in the fifties he made the following statement, which some may remember from a clip in the film *Atomic Cafe*, "I propose the President of the United States advises the Commander of the North Korean troops to withdraw his forces beyond the 58th parallel within one week or use that week to evacuate civilians from a specified list of North Korean cities that will be subjected to atomic attack by the United States Air Force."

This is the man whose name arouses such scant enthusiasm in Atlanta among the activists of the party. As for the mainstream American voter, whose fears Bentsen is supposedly intended to allay, why should anyone afrighted by the spectre of Dukakis be satisfied by Dukakis-Bentsen when they could as well go and vote for Bentsen's fellow Texan (whom he beat after the Yarborough primary), George Bush?

Dukakis's own political limitations were reviewed by the present writer a few weeks ago in this space. He has not suffered any ideological sea-change in the interim, and indeed has marched steadily towards what is called, in the freakish geometry of our times, the "centre". The most glaring deficiency of all is his lack of any economic strategy, beyond the promise of prudent management and more assiduous tax collection. The United States is now in its 67th month of continuous growth. It is true that the domestic rate of growth has averaged little more than 2 per cent a year, so one could more accurately say that the United States has been enjoying a chronic growth recession, but this does not alter the fact that there will almost certainly be no real recession before November. If all that Dukakis has to offer against that is sound management, why should not the prudent voter argue that existing management has not been doing such a bad job, and thus vote for the Republicans?

The black woman at my hotel desk here works from 11pm to 7am. Then she goes home to sleep. At 2pm she works the reception desk at another hotel down the road until it's time to come back here at 11pm. She says she just gets by, thus exemplifying the truths behind the high employment of female labour in the Reagan age. She's a Jackson supporter, and says that unless Dukakis can tell her what he is going to do for Jackson and put in her pocket, she'll vote for Bush in November.

The third person at that demonstration of unity on Monday was Jackson himself, looming over Dukakis and Bentsen. What are his options? In the weeks before the convention someone should have slipped him a quote from Hegel that Isaac Deutscher was fond of using, to the effect that a political party only truly exists when it is divided against itself. Even without

Dukakis's efforts to echo Jackson's concerns carry as much conviction as a Pat Boone cover version of Little Richard

the benefit of that useful thought, he has been patiently trying to explain to reporters that a convention is supposed to be an occasion on which differences are aired and finally resolved democratically. The following is a typical exchange, revealing of journalism's love of the Nuremberg Rally, provided the hero—or heroine— of the occasion is appropriately sanctified as an apostle of moderation. The interlocutor was Lesley Stahl of CBS:

STAHL: "I thought the [private] negotiations were aiming towards one platform. I thought you were trying to resolve these very questions in these talks, so you wouldn't have the minority votes on the floor."

JACKSON: "Let it be known that our minority planks are not for the most part a minority position. For example, most Americans do not want any more taxes on middle income and poor people. The corporations and wealthy must pay their share."

STAHL: "But Dukakis doesn't want that in the platform, and this is supposed to be his convention."

JACKSON: "That is an illusion. This is a convention of the people. This is the delegates' convention. They will determine who the nominee will be. They will determine what planks will be agreed on. They will determine who the vice-president will be. I guess I must say to you, I do not see this convention as showbusiness, but as serious business."

Directly after his appearance and press conference with Dukakis and Bentsen, Jackson went to address his delegates from the labour movement, and promised that the fight would go forward and no surrender made. Of course, there have been defeats. Jackson's camp has been pushing for party planks to include pledges to cut back defence spending, tax the rich, recognise Palestinian aspirations. Dukakis will have none of this, though against such intransigence he's agreed to call South Africa a "terrorist" state, has offered pledges on legislation, and accepted party reforms. In pursuit of such concessions, and their public display, Jackson pursues the good soldier/bad soldier roles alternately, as he must so long as he accepts the Democratic Party as his chosen vehicle. Sometimes he is asked why he does not simply break away and form a third party—to which he answers that the Democratic Party is too important to be abandoned, but that a third party is no bad idea so long as it becomes the refuge of the moderates, such as Sam Nunn, Bill Bradley and all those now nestling in Dukakis's embrace.

In fact, in the view of many of his supporters, Jackson has been excessively sedate. He has so far conspicuously held his hand from any direct belabouring of Bentsen and has gone politely through the motions of pretending to a newfound intimacy with the governor of Massachusetts, forged in a dinner between the two and their wives on 4 July. This encounter was, in fact, somewhat symbolic of what Jimmy Carter politely called Dukakis's lack of experience in dealing with black people. Jackson and his wife arrived at Boston for the much-heralded repast, found no one to greet them and trundled by taxi into the white preserves of Brookline. Having failed to make inquiry as to the gastronomic preferences and inhibitions of the Jacksons, Kitty Dukakis elected to serve a soup of New England clam chowder, a milk-based preparation to which Jackson is allergic. His soup remained untasted. Then Mrs Dukakis brought forth poached salmon in a lordly dish, and this too was regarded with marked disfavour by the Jacksons, whose view of this offering was simply that it was *boiled fish*. Black people in America eat *fried fish*. The conversation was insubstantial and the ravenous Reverend had finally to allay his hunger at the ensuing firework display by sending out for barbecued ribs.

Nothing so momentous as the traditional "fight for the soul of the Democratic Party" was at stake in Atlanta. That fight is over. In terms of reaching out to the poor and the wretched of the American earth, Jackson is the soul of the party, and Dukakis's efforts to echo his concerns carry as little conviction as Pat Boone's cover versions of Little Richard's songs in the mid-1950s. Nor is there—despite the talk of compromise—any possibility of long term unity. The verities of the political geography are mirrored in the architectural topography of Atlanta. In the centre of the town "too busy to hate" is a modernist tumult of vast hotel and office towers, developed and inhabited by the men in real estate, insurance and banking who have been among Dukakis's chief contributors. The homeless have been swept from the streets and parks.

This is the New South, anti-union and low wage, echoing the New North East of Michael Dukakis, in which the same gleaming towers rise in the centre of a city, Boston, too costly for most working people to inhabit. Even Hegel would surely have questioned the authenticity of a party divided between those who built the towers and those who dwell in the tenements, a divide which no amount of handclasps in Atlanta can bridge, even if Jesse Jackson held it as his most fervent desire.●

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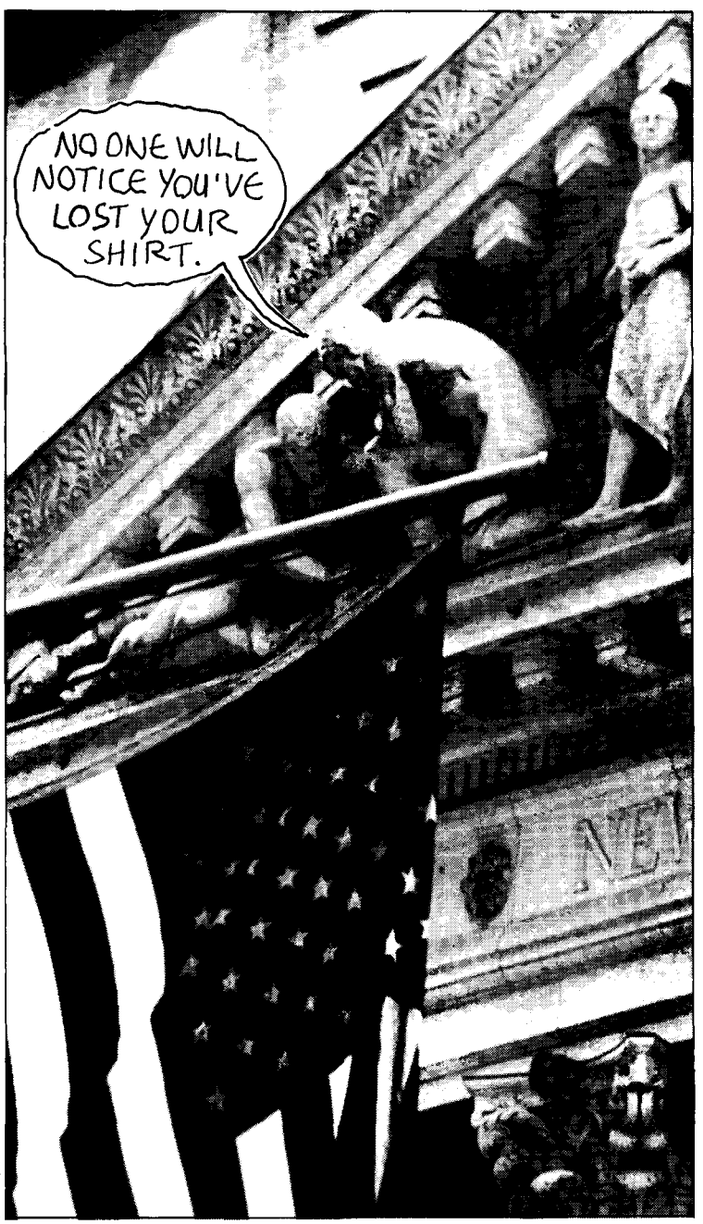
The no big deal show

A new wave of American interventionist economic thinking is available to Michael Dukakis. But he is playing safe and disregarding it, says Will Hutton

"Effectiveness is not an ideological issue," says Larry Summers, Michael Dukakis's economic adviser. "It's a matter of finding things that work." And while Ronald Reagan may still be deploring big government and celebrating entrepreneurship, his advisers are beginning to echo Summers. "When appropriate," they write, in the *Report of the President* (1988), "increased spending on worthwhile public investments can contribute to demand and output growth." In short, a dose of government can do you good, whatever the predilections of the President. It's all part of a confusing new American modesty in which economic advisers vie to be less ideological than each other; and in which grandiloquent Reaganesque claims are more and more embarrassing. This is happening because so much of what has been achieved has been in the breach rather than the observance of Reaganite doctrine.

But there is one ideological notion that all politicians in America cannot avoid: that America's best days are yet to come. Even Michael Dukakis has felt obliged to endorse this with the best and the worst of them. Yet America *is* in decline, burdened with domestic and international debts, bought out by foreigners and dividing into a nation of haves and have-nots. From Wall Street, Harvard and Washington alike the Cassandra-like thunderbolts are hurled. America's best days are over, whatever the politicians say.

The US, unable to compete internationally, is heading for perdition. For Felix Rohatyn, a Democrat and a senior partner of investment bankers Lazard Frere, "America is a first-rate military power and a second-rate economic power". For Peter Petersen, former Commerce Secretary in the last Nixon administration, the scale of economic adjustment required to correct the US's indebtedness is not understood and not on the policy-making agenda. Consumption has to be reduced, speculation curbed and investment promoted. Whatever the progress made so far in reducing America's trade deficit, it is only nibbling at the scale of the problem. More has to be done. And in the meantime, says Rohatyn, foreign buying of American companies may have to be screened.



Frank Spooner Pictures/Graffiti by Nigel Paige

'America is now a first-rate military power and a second-rate economic power'

Against all this, Ronald Reagan and the man who hopes to replace him, George Bush, are blithely optimistic. They point to the 12 million jobs that have been created, the inflation rate at four per cent, the rise in living standards...all set in train by the 1981 tax cuts and the progressive privatisation and extension of the market and deregulation since then. Bush is prescribing more of the same elixir—the only concession being that the budget deficit might be narrowed by a flexible freeze on public spending, but there certainly won't be any tax increases. As for the real economy and the decline in manufacturing, there is nothing that a little dollar devaluation cannot solve. America is fine.

It isn't. On the contrary, the charge that Reagan has simply created a candyfloss economy has more than a little validity. His much vaunted jobs have been created in financial services (two million), welfare services (3.1 million), retailing and personal services (3.8 million) and construction and the wholesale trade (2.3 million). There is nothing wrong with such growth in services—after all, it's what Americans want. What is troubling is that little of the economic product can be sold abroad. According to Emma Rothschild, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, writing in the *New York Review of Books*, the US balance of trade in services—excluding interest and dividends—has fallen sharply. Services do provide jobs, but they do

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not earn the US the foreign currency it needs.

Indeed, Rothschild's two articles indicting Reaganomics should be mandatory reading for Dukakis and all Democratic congressional candidates in November's elections. From the 53,000 people without sewers in El Paso to the infant mortality rates in part of New York City now higher than in Malaysia, Emma Rothschild describes the two-nation country Dukakis says he fears but which his rhetoric rarely succeeds in portraying.

In a world suspicious of ideology, the Democrats have shied away from any talk of fundamental institutional reform and social reorganisation just as they have from fiscal and monetary rigour. Too much declamation about America being in trouble is off limits; that was tried last time and failed. Michael Barker, former chief economist of the Democratic Leadership Council, wrote in February that "the pattern of the past several years, where we were able to consume more and more ahead of our growth in production, will soon be rudely shattered...either through a serious recession or through policies which deliberately take us through a period of belt-tightening which restores our national strength. One way or another it will happen."

He quickly found himself out of favour. Ending tax breaks and devaluing the dollar further did not commend themselves as remedies to the Democrat leadership. His message was redrafted with airy proposals for a new Democrat "economic compact between business, labour, government and the educational establishment" as the solution, and Barker resigned.

Six months later Dukakis has softened the compact idea into the notion of public-private partnership: government's role is to pump-prime, to initiate and above all to lead. "I am not a believer in laying out a Plan with a capital P," he says. "I believe in leadership...inspired leadership...that's what does the job."

Nietzschean economics, Massachusetts style. There will be big efforts to chase 100 billion dollars of uncollected tax before any tax increases; Wall Street will suffer a little more regulation; industry will get more selective and there will be short-term protection from cheap imports. Dukakis will not veto the trade bill. But for Rooseveltian New Deal or Johnsonian Great Society you will look in vain. This is the age for finding out what works and sticking with it, however minimalist.

Democrat economists who have been pressing for more courage are disappointed. Harvard's Robert Reich, who wants to see a mobilisation of investment in high technoogy, with a revival of New Deal banking institutions and government-led civil Research and Development expenditure, has been sidelined. Lester Thurow, a professor at MIT, who believes American productivity can only be lifted by a government-led change in corporate and financial organisation, has also found his suggestions watered down. Even Felix Rohatyn's suggestions for foreign investment to be screened so that it justifies itself have been politely turned down as too wild; the Japanese may mean loss of economic control, but they also bring money and jobs.

Some in the party have begun to yearn for the old Democrat compact and Democratic capitalism. They may sound like they are hankering after the 1960s, but at least the compact included the educational establishment as one of the estates in the land to be bartered with. Such boldness is now made to sound untoward. Yes, education needs more attention; yes, it needs more money; yes, it is a priority. But part of an economic compact? Smacks too much of plans and over-proactive government. That's out.

Nor are the sound finance men enjoying more favour with the Democrats; Charles Schultz, one of the economic doyens of the Brookings Institution, insists the problem is overspending. To do anything about that, "you've got to do some painful things, including cutting consumption—but who the hell wants to campaign on that?" And Felix Rohatyn's call for a 25 cent tax on petrol has also met an embarrassed silence

The Dukakis camp would reject such criticism. On closing the budget deficit, they say, their man faces up to hard choices on spending. He wants to boost economic growth, which will lift revenues. If that's not enough, then more will have to be done to boost them (implicitly accepting the case for higher taxes—excise duties on tobacco and alcohol are known to have been discussed).

It may all seem rather safe, but the leadership is calculating that what is deliverable is more credible than Democrat attempts to dress up their own prejudices and inclinations in ideological language. With an apparent lead in the polls, no one is going to challenge that judgment; yet America's problems necessitate more of a call to arms than Dukakis so far plans. If he does have anything new to offer beyond the mystique of "leadership" and "management", he is certainly keeping it well hidden. ●

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Tribal dance

Playground of St Charles' Primary School photographed by Marketa Luskacova

The tribal street dance performed by the Dewsbury parents and children to celebrate their court "victory" over Kirklees council last week, giving them the legal right to send their children to "white" schools, marks the beginning of the end of the central principle of equality and diversity for all in education.

Historians will come to see the destruction of egalitarianism in education as having begun with the assault on anti-racist education, which has conveniently become the soap opera of our times. It has provided fearful villains, and transformed little people into national heroes and heroines overnight. There have been mind games, enraged mobs, tearful children and even bloodletting, of the symbolic, and more recently, of the real kind. McGoldrick, Honeyford, Burnage, and now Dewsbury have been the really dramatic episodes. More subtle, ongoing sagas have involved the slow lingering death of the ILEA, and the demonisation of Brent and Haringey. Comedy has been provided by the greening of Baa-baa Black Sheep, and the tossing of chapatis into Shrove Tuesday.

The effect of all this has been dramatic. The very term anti-racist now seems to provoke allergic reactions even from those who not long ago were close to espousing some aspects of the cause. Meanwhile, the right has used these episodes vociferously to attack anti-racist education which it perceives as an unstable mixture of unpatriotic, unchristian and even revolutionary doctrine.

Meanwhile, the education bill currently going through parliament provides the structural framework to ensure its demise.

The story begins with the 1944 Education Act which, for the first time, introduced the idea of social advancement through an educational meritocracy open to all. The promise was unfulfilled as class inequality remained tenaciously in place. Comprehensive education and a series of compensatory interventionist programmes in the sixties were moves to realise aims of the 1944 act. At the same time, the political right began its onslaught on the principles underlying these initiatives. Most of the attacks were on

A mixed race school: why so contentious in Dewsbury?

concepts of egalitarianism in education and appeared in the Black Papers, written over that decade by people like Baroness Cox, John Marks and Rhodes Boyson. Their ideas were so effectively popularised that they were ubiquitously assumed to be self-evident. It is a strategy they have used ever since. It is no accident that the same names have been raising their voices against anti-racist education.

When the Black Paperites were active, there was no anti-racist education. Assimilationist practices prevailed. Treating blacks as "trainee whites" is how Professor Eggleston of Warwick University describes what was happening then to black pupils. "There was no mention even of cultural diversity, and the black students just learnt enough to be subservient as their lack of achievement was very clearly demonstrated to them".

But as the educational theories of child-centred learning were developed, it was inevitable that there would have to be a move away

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The Dewsbury parents' court "victory" is part of a wider attack on equality and diversity in education. Yasmin Alibhai reports

from this approach. It was in the late sixties that awareness of cultural plurality appeared, symbolised best by Roy Jenkins' famous speech in which he spoke, as Home Secretary, of the need for equal opportunity accompanied by cultural diversity "in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance". By 1975, this view had been given institutional backing in the Bullock report: "No child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of the home as he crosses the school threshold". Faith in the credo grew and it was falsely believed that this kind of multicultural education had emancipatory properties which could overcome the debilitating effects of racism.

Essentially, this is the difference between multicultural education and anti-racist education. The first focuses on lifestyles—if schools celebrate cultural diversity, black children will enjoy work, get their exam results and be on their way. The second addresses the issue of life chances and examines the barriers which stop black children from progressing. By definition, therefore, anti-racism cannot be content based, as it is in the business of challenging structures and processes which have moulded the status quo. Everything from what is taught, to teacher attitudes, to issues of power relationships, are a legitimate part of the restructuring that is demanded by anti-racist education. Within these broad parameters, there are different approaches.

But even the soft multicultural option, described by Barry Troyna, lecturer in education at the University of Warwick, as the "three S's; saris, samosas and steelbands—that doesn't threaten anything or anybody", was already being perceived as the thin end of the wedge by those opposed to any kind of innovative change in education.

In terms of policy, legislation and philosophy, the future of education in Britain is symbiotically tied in with the eradication of anti-racist education. All this is entirely consistent with what has been going on in the right-wing think tanks since the sixties.

The moves are towards elitism, education "for a purpose" and a new kind of social cohesion. Soft kinds of exotic cultures which can nestle within these boundaries are tolerable, within a commitment to the ideals and behaviour of an enterprise culture; but the alien in the wedge is gradually to be toned down. Douglas Hurd recently made this very clear: "The government shares an absolute, unquestioned and unqualified opposition to racial discrimination. We are a party of ladders leading upwards for all those able to climb."

Racism in the eighties talks not of colour but "shared cultural attributes", which are a normal human condition. A Monday Club policy paper says "Black and white children need to learn if they can, of the nation in which they live, the forces that have shaped it. Britain has a great and inspiring heritage. Our children need to be fed on it to be encouraged to make its values their own."

Within this framework, which is always presented by its missionaries as something unquestionably desirable, certain assumptions about the nature of British racism have infiltrated white consciousness. Notably, that racism is created by those who go on about it, and particularly those beastly anti-racists; that these diverse populations in this previously homogeneous country have got to integrate—since they won't disappear on boats, they could try to disappear within the shores. And that schools should nurture similarities, use a colour blind approach. That the gap between home and school is unimportant.

One of the victories of the right-wing lobby has been its ability to popularise such doctrines, through a clever use of polemics and a redefinition of language. The Baker bill is a prize-winning example of this. It has taken irresistible concepts and repackaged their meanings, and it can be very persuasive.

The right-wing Centre for Policy Studies is equally seductive. Sheila Lawler, deputy director of studies at the CPS, talks incessantly of excellence and standards in education which have been eroded. Burnage was simply about two boys "having a good bash". There is no such thing as racism. People have prejudices. Most importantly, "We have to educate ethnic minorities to take their place in society."

What has emerged through all this is a disabling impression that Baker is a sensible custodian simply responding to correct the chaos that the loonies have created. The appeal of heroic rescue is infinite and eternal. And the "intellectuals" have been giving the image heavyweight academic backing. An entire book called *Anti-racism, an assault on Education and Value*, edited by Frank Palmer, was devoted just to this crusade.

The fallacy is that education and anti-racist education are mutually exclusive and that there was a golden age when good or real education happened. One reason why this belief has been easy to float is because many anti-racists themselves have interpreted anti-racist education in superficial ways, looking at it as some kind of substitution exercise.

Anti-racist education challenges the ideologies of open enterprise. It begins with a presumption of operational inequality in this society, and struggles against it, by making proactive inroads, holding up mirrors, transforming core perceptions.

Its objectives stand squarely within the original aims of the 1944 act. They are in that sense, as Troyna points out, universal in inspiration. Troyna says that anti-racist education must develop ideas of rights and concern for all children who suffer from structural disadvantages in schools and then talk about black rights within that notion. "Otherwise white kids say, 'Tough shit, well we have a pretty tough life too.' If you ignore this, at best, you get sympathy, which is racist or you get terrible resentment and little idea about what it is really all about."

Carlton Duncan, one of very few black secondary school heads, runs a largely white school along anti-racist lines. He is convinced that anti-racist education is a real threat to the Tories. "It exposes white conservatism and elitism. Not only would it not keep blacks in their place, it would get other groups to ask too many questions." He feels the fight is on and that people like himself cannot afford to lose. "To go back to the bad old days is to think about people going back on scrapheaps—we could get inner city fires again. While the immediate impact will be on black people, whites will lose out in the end."

That for many is the challenge of the future. This may also mean changing over from thinking about equal opportunities, which merely changes the profiles of the people within pyramids but does not question the fairness or desirability of the pyramids at all. Selling equality in an unequal structure creates a major tension, as yet unresolved. Many anti-racists are moving from equal access to equal share and rights.

People involved in anti-racist education are reassessing the future. The kind of "moral" anti-racism at Burnage which engineers personal guilt and separation, or the content-based approach of learning about the evils of slavery will not do. Troyna thinks the need is for an approach which takes a "critical stance towards all political information; which is open-minded and shows respect for evidence, acts in an empathetic manner, extends children's appreciation of how power is exercised and by whom, and explores fundamental questions relating to social justice and equality." Only alternative analysis of this kind can challenge the beliefs held by a white kid that he does not have a job because of immigration and the arrival of all these blacks.

Anti-racist educators are unlikely to find allies in the Labour Party. "Ad hoc", "fortuitous", "panicky", "cowardly" are words frequently used to describe the opposition's reactions. They have given the lead, as Gus John, assistant education officer for ILEA, says, by "negligence and omission". They need to get their act together and to see the implications which the Tories have always seen. When you teach black pupils about their rights, you generate social and political ideas which could contribute towards making real Labour's profoundest aims.●

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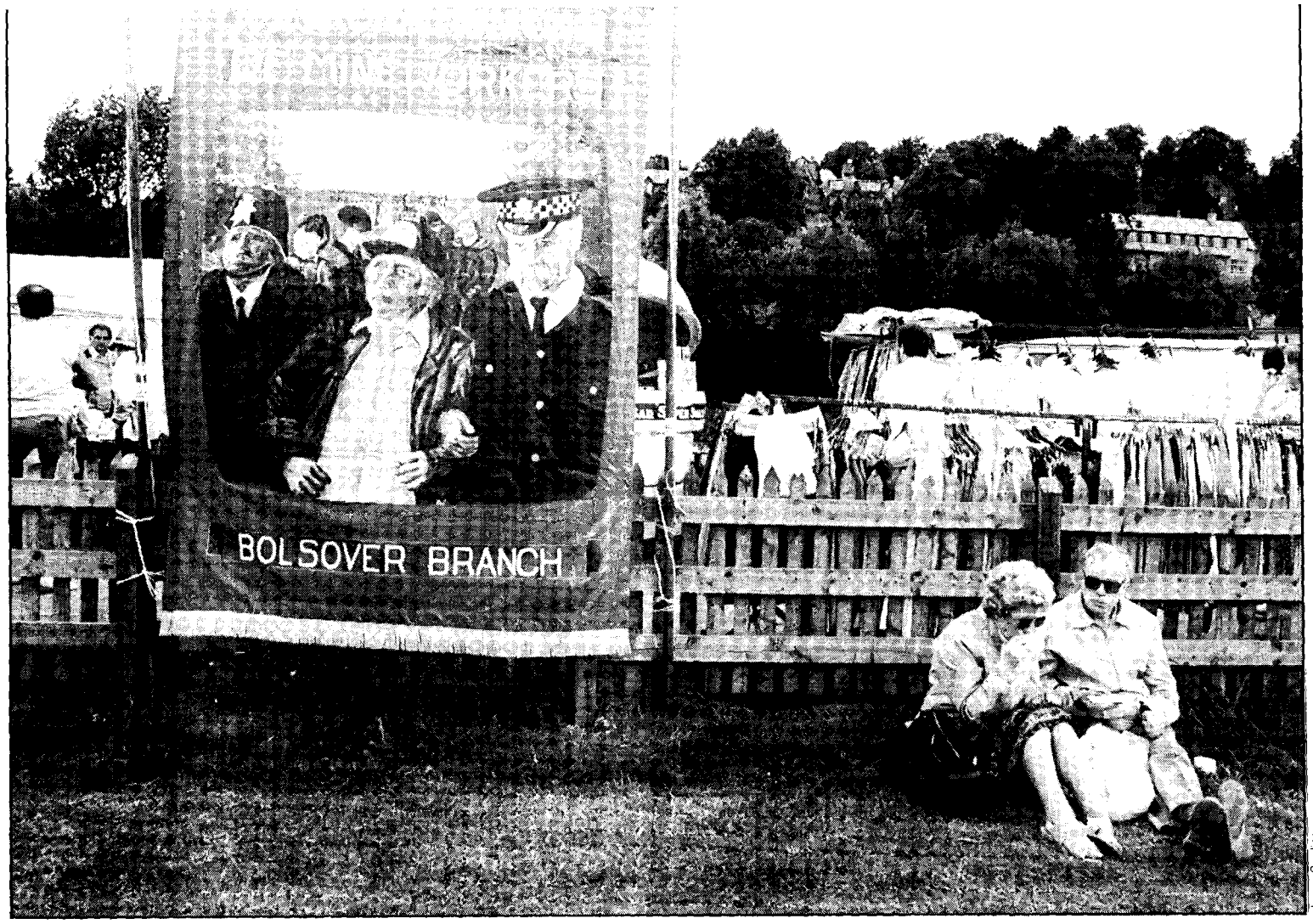

James Gardiner

Ours is a laager

Durham has just celebrated its last miners' gala. James Stephenson chronicles the demise of a Labour tradition

At 9.15, the Shotton Colliery Band, in burgundy and black jackets complete with braid, drew to a halt outside Durham's Royal County Hotel and started to play. First, *Gresford*, a mournful hymn to miners killed in the pits. Next, the jaunty *Puppet on a string*, and the band was off again with the lodge banner behind, leading the way to the site of the Big Meeting.

Each year, the mining families arrive in the town square by bus from their outlying pit villages. The procession forms up before snaking down from the city square and across the main bridge over the Wear. Banners flying they leave Durham's citadel. Touchstones of collectivism are emblazoned on the banners. "Organisation is security" from the Durham colliery engineman, "Knowledge is power" from Dawdon lodge, and "Unity is strength" from Vane Tempest lodge. But also more particular inscriptions. "We Remember" from Easington, and "Durham Cathedral" from Tudhoe.

The Durham miners' gala has long been at the heart of the Labour laager. Lately it's become an occasion for the true believers. No compromisers or trimmers welcome. The miners and their leaders return each year to draw upon the well of radicalism which sustains them through the year.

Outsiders are not always welcome. "Don't even know what it is to work down the mine," hissed one middle-aged woman as Durham Women Against Pit Closures, wearing Nelson Mandela freedom at 70 T-shirts sang, "Here we go, here we go for the women of the working class."

But the laager is disintegrating. This, the 104th Durham miners' gala, is also the last to be organised by the Durham area of the National Union of Mineworkers. Durham is merging with Northumberland to form a north east region. A general Labour day for the north east will to take its place, but for many it is the end of the Big Meet.

Once the route would have been crammed. Now the crowd spills off the pavement around the hotel, but the procession has no difficulty getting through. Further on, the crowd quickly thins to a few knots of people. There is scant demand for the Postman Pat balloons and foam rubber crododile hats on sale.

The banners bear witness to miners' past glories, and to the pantheon of mining heroes. The strike of 1984-85 has become the Great Strike, and Scargill himself has joined the elect. Monkwearmouth lodge banner shows him alongside Tommy Hepburn and A J Cook, who led the miners in the 1926 General Strike. Another shows him being arrested during the strike.

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But some of the banners belong to other unions. Then there are banners from pits which are no longer working. Few banners have more than 30 or so marchers. Only six pits now remain in Durham, compared with 126 at nationalisation in 1947. New Herrington, Eppleton, Hawthorn, Horden and Seaham form the roll call of pits which have gone since the strike. From its 170,000 peak in the 1920s, and 110,000 in 1947, there are now only 10,000 miners left in the Durham coalfield. But the shrinking workforce is not the only reason for the eclipse of the Gala. Once, the Big Meeting was a "big day out" for all the family. Now it's just one leisure attraction among many.

Those on the balcony were putting on a brave face for the shrunken crowd. Pride of place went to the burly general secretary of the Durham area National Union of Mineworkers. As the procession continued he was joined by other bigwigs, Arthur Scargill, Tony Benn, and Dennis Skinner among them. All three took the jovial ragged salute from the march past.

Once the Labour leader would have been there too. But not this year. He probably wouldn't have been welcome if he had shown up. One marcher called up to the balcony, "Dennis—tell Neil we'se asking after him. Hope he doesn't come next year neither." Applause greeted Arthur Scargill's view that the reason for election defeats was that "we've got a party leadership trying to practice capitalism better than the Tories".

Away from the speeches, nostalgia for the Big Meetings of old was everywhere in evidence. This was the other Big Meeting. Not the political rally but the day out for the family. "I was going to school when I first came here," said Mrs Jane Smith, before nipping off to play bingo in the funfair with her grown up daughter. She remembers when each banner was led by someone in fancy dress. "The past was fantastic," she said, "there was a lot more miners—you couldn't move."

This year's meeting was "not a quarter of what they used to be" according to one woman with a grubby child dangling from each hand. Another, Mrs Elsie Hay, in her late sixties, reckons she has been to 45 galas. She remembers being carried "shoulder high on his shoulders" by her dad.

Dennis Skinner in his speech might call the gala, "The bedrock of the trade union movement." And tell the crowd that, "it does your soul a power of good to come back here and renew your faith in the movement." But Elsie Hay knows that the gathering is a shadow of its former self. Once the huge green expanse of the university playing fields—known as the racecourse—would have been filled to capacity. "This field used to be choc-a-bloc," said Elsie. Now she can sit with her friend Margaret with no other person within 15 yards in any direction.

They still enjoy the gala. "We couldn't have missed today. If it had been chucking it down we would have co[illegible]e." But it is not a gathering of the clans like i[illegible]sed to be. Elsie's two brothers were mine[illegible]ey have not come for several years. "The atmosphere's not the same," says Elsie, "Once they wouldn't have missed it." But Elsie and Margaret do not think they will come to whatever replaces the gala next year.

Despite the banners and the bands, the turn-out is a quarter of what it once was.

North News and Pictures

Others are scornful of increasing numbers of outsiders. "Everywhere you go there are those daft leftwingers thrusting things into your hand—they've nothing to do with miners," grumbled one man in his fifties.

The Big Meeting is a more staid affair than it used to be. Brian Smith, a miner from Easington is in his thirties. "A lot of people come here just for the beer, just for the piss up like," he says. But gone are the days when he first came and men from different collieries used to have gang fights. The unity of the strike ended that. The 50 or so teenage boys calling themselves the Gilesgate Casuals are tame by comparison. No one seemed impressed by their claim to be "the top boys in Durham city".

Mining is deeply embedded in the history of Durham and the north east. The miners' brass bands take it in turns to play at a special miners' service in the cathedral on gala day. Then they march out down the aisle, banners and all. The Northern Echo's editorial summed up most people's feelings when it began, "Who from the North East will not feel a twinge of regret as the history book closes today on the last Durham miners' gala?"

Many outside the north east will feel the same way. Part of Labour's roots are dying here. How will they be replaced?

James Gardiner

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Mexico's mafia

Is Mexico really now safe for democracy? Emiliano Magon fears that the ruling party's fixers are still in control

When the Mexican elections for the presidency and congress ended in what the media called unprecedented chaos, the press trumpeted the news that Mexico was entering a new and possibly democratic phase. They hailed the fact that the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) accepted, after much internal bickering, something less than its usual 80 per cent share of the vote. As the PRI uncharacteristically staggered from one post-election disaster to another, the international press corps unanimously bought the argument that the apparent decline of PRI fortunes represents an end to its 60-year domination of the country. The *Independent* editorialised that Mexico now possessed a responsible opposition and an equally responsible ruling party. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The surrealistically named Institutional Revolutionary Party has run Mexico since 1929 like a traditional Mexican patriarch. Organised by its most machiavellian of presidents, Plutarco Elias Calles, the PRI was designed to end almost 20 years of continuous and bloody civil war which brought the country near to collapse and placed it firmly under the tutelage of the United States. Calles organised a corporatist party which included all social sectors: workers, peasants, business and the middle class. His successor, Lazaro Cardenas, mythologised as a president of the left, perfected the PRI's unique skill of combining strongly left-wing rhetoric with the conservative economic policies necessary to maintain American support.

All politics and bargaining takes place within the PRI. Each sector within the party is run like a benevolent Mafia controlling and incorporating every possible group and movement. Everything from housing associations to rock groups, taxi cooperatives and prostitutes are certified by it. The PRI's power lies in the fact that it is impossible to get a job or a favour without the support of the all-pervasive and controlling party. Such manipulatory skills require rewards, and PRI leaders regularly and generously compensate themselves with houses in Acapulco, Miami or Paris and heavy investments in the United States.

To crown its achievement the PRI permits the existence of a number of small left—and right-wing—parties which it finances and even organises.

The PRI entered the recent election campaign frightened by the social consequences of its continued economic squeeze on the poor and the inability of its system of patronage to deliver. The party president openly spoke about her fears of a military coup within two years. In the past such problems could be overcome by relying on the attraction of a populist president. But Miguel de la Madrid, elected at the outset of the crisis in 1982, proved to be a haughty, unbending and arrogant technocrat with little personal charm. Such touches like his wandering through the ruins of the 1985 earthquake sporting a Gucci jacket did not endear him to the population. Carlos Salinas, if anything, is even less popular and even high-ranking officials disparagingly refer to him as Adam Ant.

Most important of all, no government is possible in Mexico without the acquiesence, if not the full support, of the Americans. At the least, they require a peaceful and stable neighbour. But in recent years they have once again been traumatised by the same threat of disorder creeping across its long and unmilitarised border with Mexico that led them to dismember the country in 1849. The PRI has been losing legitimacy in their eyes because of its inability to control the drug trade, immigrant labour and its continued opposition to American policy in Central America. The US showed signs of switching their support to the right-wing strongly pro-American National Action Party (PAN) and the PRI feared that they were fostering an alliance between the PAN and the hitherto loyal and weak military.

No government is possible in Mexico without the acquiescence, if not the full support, of the Americans

The PRI leadership reasoned that if they could create a strong left-wing challenge to their rule, the Americans, out of fear, would have no choice but to support them. The efforts of Cuauhtemoc Cardenas, son of the lionised Lazaro Cardenas, to democratise the PRI fitted in perfectly with their designs. He was expelled and announced his candidature on behalf of the small PRI-controlled opposition Authentic Mexican Revolutionary Party (PARM). Just as PARM was a creature of the PRI, Cardenas would continue to act for PRI interests and rejoin the party after the election. As the son of one of its founders, he could provide a discreet and none-too-troublesome opposition. Most importantly, with his left-wing agenda, he could put the fear of God into the Americans. But things went badly askew.

The mere presence of Cardenas unleashed the memory and the myth of his father, "Tato" Lazaro, the man of the people, the man who stood up to the multinationals, redistributed land, forwarded the trade union movement and spoke a language the peasants and workers understood. Cuauhtemoc's election meetings turned into revivals. Wherever he appeared he was met by demonstrations of messianic fervour from the popular classes not seen since his father's presidency in the 1930s. He was visibly shaken but secretly pleased.

The election results dumbfounded the party. The traditionalists wanted to doctor the ballots. But their presidential candidate, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, stuck out for a closer result. After several days of acrimonious debate a compromise was reached, allowing the expected PRI victory but with a greatly weakened Salinas.

This suits the party's fixers. They realise that their system of patronage is too deeply rooted to be changed and that a liberal-voiced president is a useful front while they continue with business as usual. The proof is already there. If previously outspoken newspapers like the *Independent* and the *New York Times* can buy Salinas's message that democracy is on the way, the PRI is, as usual, home and dry.

But Cardenas is suddenly ambitious. Despite himself, he has achieved something unique in Mexican history, the forging of a left-wing coalition made up of something more than intellectuals. He has found himself at the head of a potential army he neither understands nor can probably control. Should he decide not to accept a compromise with Salinas and the PRI he could unleash a mass movement and the spell of the PRI would be broken. At the moment he is hesitating, one moment calling for mass demonstrations and the next warning against illegal actions.

The Cardenas family have the power to destroy the party they helped to create, but by doing so could unleash a decade of violence every bit as murderous as that which the PRI was created to prevent. Such upheavals would lead to direct American intervention. Rarely has the decision of so few people been so crucial. Meanwhile they must ponder the prophetic words of Porfiro Diaz and fear the assassin's bullet.●

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POLITICAL COLUMN

'Post'-man's knock

Value-based divisions are replacing class in voting behaviour—even in Britain

Stephen Howe

Kensington was a strangely uneventful by-election. To a degree—a very limited degree—it provides some sanction for greater optimism about Labour's prospects. Surveying the consensus of recent polls here last week, I noted the major upsurge in Conservative support, and implicitly excluded the Guardian's Marplan survey (showing Labour only two points behind) as a maverick finding. The Kensington result, however, seems to support the Marplan view; and perhaps suggest that the slump in Labour's fortunes which followed Kinnock's defence own goals was very temporary.

Kensington was of course only a fairly encouraging result for Labour; only so by standards of expectation which have been persistently depressed. Ministers are right to point out that on any longer-range historical measure it was a poor showing at a time when the government is pushing through some widely detested legislation. On the other hand, there are several plausible suggestions that in a more "normal" by-election Labour might have won.

The most questionable of these is that emphasised by the candidate herself: that she was hurt by being starved of media attention. Despite her obvious personal qualities, there seems no prima facie reason to presume that more coverage, or a higher turnout, would have especially favoured Labour. Neil Kinnock, predictably, blamed Tony Benn's leadership challenge and the consequent public perceptions of Labour disunity for failure to take the seat. Benn responded by pointing the finger at the leader's disarmament zig-zags. Both may be right. My own feeling, too, about the Labour Kensington literature I saw was that it was curiously unpolitical: whilst offering good arguments for being agin the government, its specifically pro-Labour message was somewhat muted. The strikingly successful Green Party intervention—by far their best by-election performance—must have taken support primarily and ironically from the greenest of the major parties, Labour. Workers at the SLD's Kensington office on election night, incidentally, didn't trouble to conceal their gleeful hope that the Greens, and possibly even Cynthia Payne, might outstrip the Owenites. By the late evening this seemed to be the Democrats' sole remaining desire. I share their disappointment that it didn't happen.

The steady if still modest growth in Green votes is just one of several signs of a new dimension in British politics: one which may point a direction in which Labour can and should move. A decade ago, American political analyst Ronald Inglehart floated the idea of a general shift toward "post-materialist" values in advanced industrial democracies . The theory was that whereas the industrial revolution initiated a gradual change from politics being determined by cleavages like religion and region to its being shaped above all by economic class, now a further change was underway. Societies, and individual voters, formed by prolonged economic security would increasingly be swayed by appeals to non-material values: personal autonomy, freedom of expression, environmental awareness and so on. In more radical vein, writers on the left like Rudolf Bahro and André Gorz have made rather similar suggestions, as have a growing range of new socialist thinkers especially in Italy, France and the Scandinavian countries.

Parties of the left must adjust to green and "liberal" issues or die

Demands based around this new politics—of feminism, gay and lesbian rights, the black agenda, ecology, anti-nuclearism—have found a growing place in Labour's internal debates, though very little as yet in its policymaking or the perceptions of its leaders.

The upshot of Inglehart's, or Bahro's or Gorz's arguments is that class will continue to decline in electoral significance. So might cleavages—whether or not class-based—over economic policies. Parties of the left must adjust to this, base their appeal increasingly on green and "liberal" issues and the new social movements formed around them, or die. A secondary implication, at least of Inglehart's version, is that the more economically secure an individual's upbringing the more she or he will espouse these new values; and that the more "post-industrial" the society (as indicated for instance by the shift from manufacturing to services) the more salient such values will become. The new politics, this suggests, should be above all a phenomenon of the middle class in long-industrialised, wealthy countries.

These latter claims don't seem to hold very well. Anthony Heath and his collaborators found that in Britain there was very little correlation between social class and the espousal of liberal or postmaterialist values. There was, however, an association between higher education and these ideas. Now Norwegian political scientist Oddbjorn Knutsen has shown (*British Journal of Political Science*, July 1988) that the relative importance of the materialist-postmaterialist division in different European countries bears little relation to the country's level of economic development.

It appears that over Europe as a whole there has been a decided long-term change in electoral attitudes, with ideological or value-based divisions replacing older, structural ones like religion and class. It also seems that parties of the left have recently done best in countries where one or both of these ideological cleavages most heavily influences the electorate. If there is a general trend in all industrial countries towards the increasing importance of this kind of issue then Britain is a very late starter. It's the only country in Knutsen's ten-nation sample where social class is still the most important indicator of electoral behaviour. It seems logical to presume that there is some causal relationship between the weakness of value-based electoral cleavages in Britain and the recent poor performance of the left here. It's extremely difficult to tell, though, which way round the pattern of cause and effect may run. Is the left weak because of an unfavourable political culture? Or is the lack of receptiveness of the political culture to new agendas the consequence of past left failings? How much can political parties do to break out of old patterns in British political behaviour and open new ground?

The only way to find out would be for Labour, still the only party conceivably placed to make the attempt, to push with all its efforts in that direction. It is hampered in so doing by many of its own traditions, but vigorously pushing a programme of democratisation, decentralisation, environmentalism and the empowerment of the disadvantaged might still provide its best chance. It doesn't yet show much sign of trying this, and the policy review is hopelessly conservative in many of these areas. Labour is still fighting over the ground of past, lost campaigns.

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LETTERS

Colour blind reports

Yasmin Alibhai's article "Criminal injustice" (*NSS*, 8 July) charted the present inequalities of the criminal justice system with great clarity.

I would not share John Patten's optimism about imminent improvements in the system, although I would be happy to be proved wrong.

I have great respect for Lennox Thomas and would not dispute his observations on stereotypes and report writing generally, although data gathered in Hackney on social enquiry report recommendations would not provide him with complete backing.

Locally, it would appear that young black people do not miss out on the "middle options" as he suggests. What does happen is that they reach these middle options earlier in their career. The effect is as Thomas says, young black people reach custody sooner with a "helping hand" from report writers.

The reason for this is the "colour blind" approach of report writers who ignore the imbalances in sentencing at all points in the "system" and, as a consequence, pitch their recommendations on young black people slightly higher at each stage.

This is exacerbated by the more frequent use of reports on young black people without any recommendation at all, which is effectively a recommendation for custody.

One correction: the Hackney data referred to did not originate with the CRE, although we are happy for it and others to use it.

It comes from the report *Is Justice Colour Blind? A study of the impact of race in the juvenile justice process in Hackney*, published by Hackney Social Services in 1986 and an introductory report *Juvenile Justice in Hackney*, published a year earlier.

Jonathan Tipler
Research Officer
Hackney Social Services
London E9

Bell's ringing

Jeremy Laurance's article "Blaming the messenger" (*NSS*, 1 July) is a sad reflection of how the left has singularly failed to grasp the role played by MP Stuart Bell in the tragic Cleveland affair.

Given the dire, almost catastrophic events of last summer, his courageous and dynamic response was not only wholly appropriate but also the only option available.

To its discredit, the left in its obsessive need to view everything as a fundamentalist "us and them struggle" has singularly failed to appreciate and portray the role of the catalyst to all the events of this week—namely Stuart Bell.

Danuta O'Neill
Newcastle Upon Tyne

Backyard wisdom

It might as well be napalm that your columnist Michael Leapman ("The Digger", *NSS*, 8 July) uses.

His purchase and ignorant use of the chemical spray both funds and sanctions the industry that spawns chemical weapons. There is a direct line between the bottles in the hardware shops, via the multinationals, to the defoliants used in Vietnam, and as caring gardeners and citizens we should spurn them.

His dilemma should not be whether to spray, but what to spray. Generations of gardeners have concocted remedies that perhaps are not as instant or total as those the 20th century demands from its products, but are at least environmentally considerate.

Given that gardening is unnatural in a strict sense, we can and should strive to unbalance nature as little as possible, and also get crops. We inhabit a shared world—and if we don't practise sense in our backyards and preach it in our magazines, our children's children won't know the options.

Alternatives exist, and we must overcome our reluctance to learn from experience, or perish like blackfly.

Stephen Abrahall
Shepton Mallet

Quote...unquote

I hope that Stephen Howe, unlike T S Eliot, is not going to become addicted to gnomic utterances. "What was it Gandhi said?" he asks (*"Insecure traditions"*, *NSS*, *1 July*), thus distracting my mind from the main point of his argument, because I do *not know* what it was Gandhi said.

David Duckels
Driffield
East Yorkshire

Nuclear semantics

John Lloyd ("State of the Nation", *NSS*, 1 July) is perfectly correct to say that Labour has been wrong about many things, and that the policy review is "the time for explicit admission of past mistakes".

But there is a curious dichotomy between his comments on the issues of membership of the European Community, links with the trade unions and economic efficiency, and his comments on the party's defence policy.

Once again—and despite the acres of wordage that have been expended on the subject—he prefers to concentrate on the words used to describe it, rather than what the policy actually means.

Contrasting "unilateralism" with "multilateralism" is a sterile game much beloved of the right as a means of diverting attention from the real issue of nuclear disarmament. By pretending that the two approaches are mutually exclusive, the right—Labour as well as Conservative—seeks to characterise unilateralism as an approach adopted out of despair or defeatism, with no hope or expectation of response from one's opponents; whereas only multilateralism, by a series of balanced reductions achieved through exhaustive negotiations, can bring about the desired nuclear-free end.

But, as Ben Pimlott showed (*New Statesman*, 3 June), the two in fact work perfectly together: that unilateral initiatives are needed to secure multilateral results.

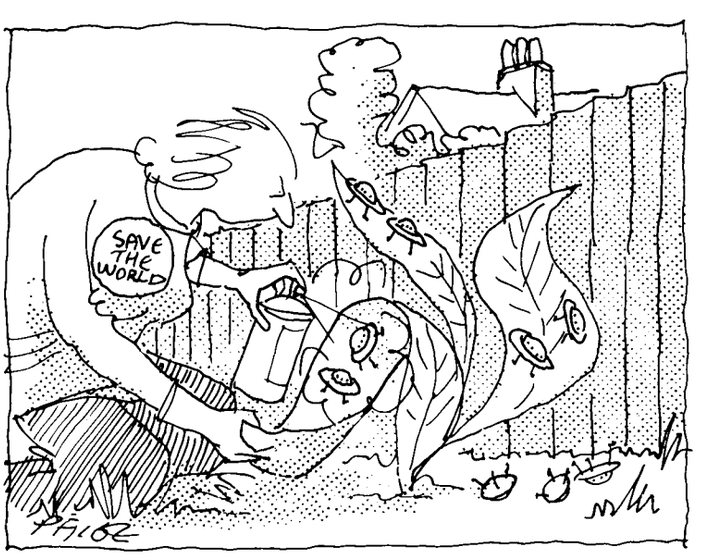
GRIT, after all, was the means by which the INF Treaty was eventually arrived at—as it worked for the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972, and will work again for other treaties in the future.

The real struggle now is between those who do want nuclear disarmament, and those who do not—and those who don't often call themselves multilateralists in an attempt to disguise it.

In this, Labour MPs such as John Gilbert and Peter Shore are no different from David Owen and Margaret Thatcher: people who favour the purchase of Trident and the modernisation of NATO's battlefield nuclear weapons.

It would be more helpful—not least to Labour and the defence policy review—if John Lloyd were to discuss the blockage to the process of nuclear disarmament posed by these fake multilateralists than hand ammunition to the right by getting hung up on the words involved.

Joseph Nicholas
London SW1



Patronising language

Shame on David Widgery ("Can the NHS pull through?", *NSS*, 8 July) for using the odious words "crippled" and "crippling".

How can he mar such a good article by referring to some of the very people he claims to be trying to support in patronising and derogatory terms?

M Brenda Wilks
Doncaster

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LETTERS

Budding euphemisms

Vicky Hutchings' timely piece on the euphemisms that advertisers use to avoid mentioning bodily functions ("Backchat", *NSS*, 15 July) omitted a prime culprit: the cotton buds advert that talks about "those important little places". Is there no end to this madness?

Tim Beecham
London SW4

Nuclear knowledge

In your issue of 24 June, Paul Rogers ("Carry on regardless") stated: "The British government's view [is] that a limited nuclear war can be fought and won."

This is the first I have heard of it. Evidence, please?

Michael Howard
Oriel College
Oxford

Animals and Aids

The revelations of Duncan Campbell about sharp practice by drug companies over Aids ("The amazing Aids scam", *NSS*, 24 June) come as no surprise to those of us whose interest and concern extend to laboratory animals.

Understanding of the causes and spread of Aids has progressed with remarkable speed, yet virtually all the research involved has been carried out without using laboratory animals. Cell cultures, microscopy, gene technology, clinical studies, epidemiology and computer modelling have proved excellent methods of research.

Yet for the development of vaccines and drugs, scientists tell us that an animal "model" of human Aids is essential. Since chimpanzees are among the very few animals in whose bloodstream the human Aids virus survives, American pro-vivisection lobbies are hoping to lift the ban on trapping and export of wild chimps. Some believe the survival of chimpanzees in the wild is thus seriously threatened.

Researchers are already beginning to find that potential vaccines and drugs for Aids which have been tested in animals are proving ineffective or damaging in people.

When will resources be directed to humane research methods so that

relevant knowledge can be gained without causing animals to die in their hundreds of thousands?

Gill Langley
Hitchin
Herts

Silencing theatre

Albert Hunt's timely piece on new theatre writing under Thatcher ("Avoiding making a drama out of a crisis", *NSS*, 1 July) made some telling points.

To put it bluntly, it is impossible to write a "public" play set in a living room (or any domestic setting) for a small number of performers (Trevor Griffiths's *The Party* is the one significant exception). As Howard Brenton once said: "You can't write a play that describes social action with under ten actors"—unless one goes in for the near-manic doubling of a smaller cast.

But unless a new writer is a genius or very lucky (preferably both), she or he is not likely to get a large scale, large cast play produced until she or he has "served an apprenticeship" of small plays for small spaces (the inevitable round of studio productions), by which time there is either a "bottom drawer" full of unproduced "big" plays, or a writer incapable of writing them.

As for satire: why on earth should the most appropriate response to nine destructive years of Thatcherism be laughter? Is this the only response a writer can evoke from an audience?

Seeing *Serious Money* last year (before the election), while enjoyable, gave me the feeling of being shat on by a play that could not take either its subject or its audience seriously—its West End transfer was a very bitter irony.

My very great fear is that a whole generation of writers including perhaps myself—will not be allowed the time, money and space to develop the necessary theatrical skills to use the theatre as an entertaining and critical large public forum—a silencing of dissent every bit as effective as an axed grant or a new Official Secrets Act. I hope I'm wrong.

Derrick Cameron
Temba Theatre Company

CND protests

The fact that CND representatives at the European Nuclear Disarmament (END) convention in Lund did not sign a protest on behalf of the Hungarian minority and others in Transylvania threatened by the devastating measures of social engineering planned by the Romanian government ("Frontlines", *NSS*, 8 July) is indeed of interest to your readers, many of whom must be CND members.

But the suggestion that we did not sign because of fear of the Communist backlash inside CND, and fear of causing offence to the official peace committees of the WTO countries must have come as a surprise to them.

We did not sign because CND has a policy on human rights only so far as this affects "peace rights" (in other words, the right to organise independently of the state, and the right to conscientious objection) and, as a peace movement, we find this adequate and reasonable.

We have regularly protested in support of independent peace activists in the Soviet Union, Hungary, Poland, GDR and CSSR. In the past, this has indeed proved "offensive" to the peace committees and has given rise to personal and political abuse on their part, which in itself has been quite offensive to us. At present we are protesting that many of these peace activists could not take part in the convention itself.

We have also regularly made proposals to the Soviet peace committee for unilateral actions by the Soviet Union (for example for delinkage between SDI INF, rejected with contempt by the SPC two weeks before Gorbachev himself implemented it), which have also apparently caused offence.

Of course, there are Communist Party members and others in CND who have consistently opposed CND's policy of non alignment and support for unofficial peace activists, as they have opposed our calls for unilateral initiatives from the Soviet Union, but they have been as consistently outvoted. They have also been outdated, by Gorbachev, *glasnost* and *perestroika*.

What is really ironical in the present situation is that the official Hungarian peace committee should criticise CND for not taking up a human rights issue; it is usually the other way round.

But the important matters are what is happening in Transylvania, and the growing deterioration in the relationship between Hungary and Romania at a time when Gorbachev is apparently considering pulling Soviet troops out of Hungary.

Jane Mayes
Chair
CND International Advisory Group

Atmospheric pressure

Why not pressurise spray cans with ozone?

Eugene Leeb
London N3

Edith Summerskill

I am writing a biography of Edith Summerskill, politician and feminist. I would very much like to hear from anyone who has personal memories of her or, indeed, opinions as to her career and outlook.

Any papers will be carefully copied and returned.

Michael Summerskill
4 Millfield Lane
London N6

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STATE OF THE NATION

Unleashed voice

Yvonne Roberts

"Fathers guilty of 'orgy of abuse'," ran a headline in the *Guardian* last Thursday, exactly seven days after the publication of the Butler-Sloss report on Cleveland. One man was found guilty of attempted buggery with his five year old child and buggery with his seven year old stepson. In an earlier trial, the jury was told a woman held down her distraught five year old, while she was raped by her father. "Your dad says I've got to," her mother told her. Two days earlier, a headline in the *Daily Telegraph*, reporting Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary's latest sermon on the social rot, read, "Parents have a duty to stop children becoming brutes." Irony has been rich these last few weeks.

Whatever else the Butler-Sloss report may do, it certainly won't interrupt the pattern of home life as experienced by many thousands of children typified in Thursday's court case. Instead, the report itself has become part of the topsy-turvy Alice-in-Wonderland world, which must seem a living nightmare to abused children. The report, at a cost of £9 million, has been almost unanimously welcomed in the press, as a new beginning in the treatment of child sexual abuse. On the contrary, many children will remain unprotected, and very definitely far from understood, and much abuse undetected, because society (and that includes Butler-Sloss) can cope better that way.

Three days before the report's publication, Sarah Helm, who has produced some admirable work in the *Independent*, drew on the evidence of lawyers to detail cases of the children in Cleveland who *had* been abused. A three year old talks of sexual intercourse. She is taken into care. The father protests his innocence to Stuart Bell MP. Later, the father admits "digital" penetration. He also has a record of sexual offences. Another child, an eight year old, told of her father's suicide in prison, expresses only relief to her mother. None of the above received widespread coverage for the simple reason they give the wrong tone to a story whose "line" was decided within the first few weeks.

Only the *Sunday Mirror*, among the tabloids, ran "Thank You, Dr Higgs," above the report of two women whose children had been sexually abused. In the end, it was left to letter writers. "When the family is no haven" ran the headline on last Sunday's letters page in the *Observer*. The press coverage of Butler-Sloss has not simply been marked by omission, but also by its uncritical acceptance of the recommendations. The *Independent* leader said, "All the suffering in Cleveland will not have been entirely in vain if the sexual abuse of children is now taken by the nation as a whole with the seriousness and sanity shown in this report." Serious and sane—but how effective? Not one newspaper pointed out, for instance, that the report failed to tackle the question of why (mainly) men sexually abuse their children. That question had to be posed a week later by Melanie Phillips in the *Guardian*. No newspaper suggested that an open debate on the causes might, in turn, help to achieve a consensus on solutions.

On publication of Butler-Sloss, not one newspaper took up the issue of prevention. Or looked at how cuts have affected anti-sexism in education. Or asked how can we diminish the potency of masculinity so it does not devour the rights of the young. Almost no newspaper examined the practicalities of what Butler-Sloss recommended. Butler-Sloss has an affection for the "middle ground", but there is no middle ground in child sexual abuse. There are very different analyses and treatments and ignoring that diversity, as she has done, doesn't render it invisible. And, as professionals know, sexual abuse takes many more forms than buggery and evidence may only be the word of the child. Where is the middle ground then?

The press has made ultra-feminists the enemy—not the men who abuse children

In the early days of Cleveland, as Mica Nava points out in her analysis of the press in the *Feminist Review* special issue on abuse, Marietta Higgs became an early victim of the witch hunt less because of what she may or may not have done, more because she appeared as a feminist and a foreigner. "In this way, the spectre of feminism becomes folk devil."

Marietta Higgs may or may not be a feminist, but the identification with feminism in the press is vital because it makes the claim that child sexual abuse is widespread and serious appear part of the luggage of the "loony" left. It trivialises it. Marietta Higgs allegedly has no regard for the sanctity of a man's home as his castle; all feminists are the same, domestic wreckers.

The theme of feminist sabotage out to "get" the family gained strength with a piece in the *Sunday Telegraph* in November, written by Anthea Hall. "A faint awareness of collusive feminism has never quite disappeared from the inquiry", she wrote. "In the Cleveland saga, the authority of medicine has got hopelessly bogged down in the assumptions of the far reaches of left-wing politics and enormous harm has resulted," Dr James Le Fanu pontificated in a different piece on the same page.

In May, in response to a book which suggested that the way men are made "masculine" might have something to do with a large number of men wishing to have intercourse with children, the *Daily Mail* pictured David Thomas clutching his baby. "This abuse insults me as a father, a husband and a man," read the headline. Thomas himself warns: "What we are seeing...is the hijacking of a genuine problem for sociological and political ends."

Feminism has never been represented by a consensus. However, one group, a feminist coalition, active as social workers, voluntary workers and so on, in child sexual abuse, has issued a briefing paper which has gone virtually unreported. This indicates more than clearly, not only that much of what Butler-Sloss recommends has already been operating in a grassroots network across the country—but also that much of what the coalition advocates does not weaken, but strengthens, family life.

The coalition, for instance, rejects an authoritarian professional approach—since much of the progress in treatment has come from women's groups. It is against the removal of the child from the home, the coalition believes, unlike Marietta Higgs, that "the family" is not the "cause" of sexual abuse—the male abuser is.

A press critical of feminists, in the context of Cleveland, matters because it is McCarthyite. It deals in slur and innuendo. It also tries to marginalise and discredit possibly the only voice of dissent. A voice which rejects the idea that the abuser is part of a network of circumstances and, therefore, not fully to blame for his actions.

Hold these views and instantly you become a heretic. Too many newspapers have preferred to see Cleveland as part of a plot hatched by a handful of "ultra-feminists" intent on blowing up a revered if crumbling institution: the family. That way, feminism not masculinity, becomes the enemy. It is not the abuser who is the problem but the saboteurs. And the voice of the children still goes unheard.

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Decline of the wig and gown

Barristers are running scared before the might of solicitors. But how much good will that do you and me, asks Jolyon Jenkins?

I have a friend who works in one of the large firms of City solicitors. The last time I visited him at work, the immaculate receptionist took one look at my anorak and cycle panniers, and directed me to the post room.

That's what it's like in the big City law firms these days. While the legal aid firms still struggle to pay the bills, the big boys have become absorbed into the money-maniacal culture of the City. They have "corporate images" and PR agents; they work all hours and contract "yuppy flu"; and they have developed a taste for fancy accommodation. Says Robert West of De Groot Collis, upmarket London estate agents: "I think solicitors are much more concerned about their image than they used to be. Traditionally they've had fairly dowdy offices—but that's not now the case."

No longer are they the barristers' shabby country cousins. Some solicitors are now earning serious money. According to a recent survey by the legal recruitment agency Reuter Simkin, the average salary for a solicitor aged 34 in a firm of 21 partners or more is £35,000. The highest salary surveyed was £60,000. There are even rumours of an articled clerk (a trainee solicitor) who earns £18,000, though nobody has actual met him or her. A pupil barrister is lucky to earn anything at all, and quite a few don't.

So are barristers an endangered species? Last week's report on the future of the legal profession, produced by a committee chaired by Lady Marre, suggests that perhaps they are. A majority of the committee recommended that solicitors should have rights of audience in the crown courts and should be elegible for appointment as high court judges.

The Bar sees this as a potentially devastating blow. Crown court work—particularly when it's legally aided—is bread and butter to many young barristers. In return, the solicitors conceded almost nothing—except to agree that barristers could see some professional clients without the intercession of a solicitor. This is of only marginal importance, although, according to Lady Marre at a press conference last week: "We had to twist Sir Derek's arm a little on that one." Sir Derek Bradbeer, president of the Law Society, smiled down at his hands as she said that. Evidently it hadn't been too painful.

Benoit Jacques

The committee split purely along party lines. All the solicitors voted for greater rights of audience; all the barristers but one submitted a minority report arguing against. The independent members almost all voted with the solicitors. Given that the committee was set up so that the legal profession could settle its differences amicably and internally, nothing was achieved. Last week Lady Marre put a brave face on matters, saying that each branch of the profession had achieved a much greater understanding of what was at stake. And it was a joy to hear (Lord) Robert Alexander QC explain why there wasn't such a great disagreement as all that. "It is perfectly possible," he said, "for there to be a legitimate range of differences of opinion... the report points to the benefit of us as barristers having had the benefit of the views of solicitors, perhaps they as solicitors having had the views of us as barristers and each of us having had the views of the independent members."

In the wake of the report, the Bar Council has clutched at straws, stressing that the committee had reached a "firm conclusion" against fusion (the merging of the two branches of the profession). In fact, it decided that fusion was outside its terms of reference; and the report merely rejects "*simple* fusion".

But it's arguable that the real threat to the Bar comes not from Marre but from the internal dynamics of the profession. There's oversupply of barristers and a chronic shortage of solicitors. Currently, some 200 barristers each year call it a day and decide to requalify as solicitors. This is apparently an increasing trend. Eric Taylor, a former chair of the Law Society's Bar Transfer Committee has said: "We are interested in those who take the positive step and join our honourable profession." The Bar is more circumspect. According to Nial Morisson, deputy chief executive of the Bar Council: "There have always been a number of barristers who seek transfer to the solicitors' branch of the profession for whatever reason, but it is too early to say that the recent increased figures indicate a trend."

Barristers are less use to solicitors than in the past, and in some ways have become a liability. According to a recent case, a solicitor can be held liable for having instructed an incompetent barrister. But a barrister still can't be sued for his or her incompetent performance in court. And, as the big firms are becoming more and more specialised, they increasingly don't *need* to seek the opinion of barristers. According to one solicitor: "In many areas a firm our size [64 partners] will contain several experts on a subject. We can deal with most problems in house."

The Bar also has persistent worries that it's not attracting sufficiently clever entrants. Actually the statistics don't bear this out: the Bar is

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getting nearly as many first class graduates as it ever did. But it *is* probably true that what one barrister terms "the good second eleven" are now more likely to become solicitors.

The "progressive" response to all this is to rejoice at the dismantlement of the legal profession's Spanish customs. But the glee could be misplaced, if the government seizes on the Marre report as a way of cutting the legal aid bill. If your solicitor can represent you in court, the legal aid board will baulk at paying for a barrister to do so too. But, as one radical solicitor pointed out last week: "There are times when two brains on a case really are better than one. The rich will continue to hire barristers—it's just the poor who won't be able to."

Neither does Marre begin to touch the real fat cats of the Bar — the civil specialists. They're doing even better than the solicitors. It's possible for a good 30-year-old barrister in a specialist set of chambers to be earning £120,000. Robert Alexander himself can ask £2,500 for a three hour conference. A solicitor who has paid this says: "It turned out to be well worth it for the client, because it was a claim involving several hundreds of thousands of pounds, and when the other side heard that Bob Alexander had given an opinion in our favour, they dropped their case." Alexander is so respected that he's used almost as a privatised surrogate judge—you don't argue with his opinions.

Two hallowed restrictive practices, barely touched on by Marre, make it premature be writing obituaries for the Bar. First there's the physical space in the Inns of Court, where the rents are subsidised by the Inns. Most chambers are now ridiculously overcrowded. Barristers *could* set up chambers elsewhere—some have—but they'd have to pay market rents.

The shortage is also maintained by the archaic practices of barristers' clerks, who negotiate fees with the solicitors and are usually paid on a percentage basis. It's in the clerk's interest to try to inflate the fees of a few barristers rather than to help the new entrants—because, ultimately, the more experienced barristers there are, the lower the fees. In some specialist areas of law, there may be only, say, 40 barristers in the country with sufficient expertise. It's possible for most of them to be involved in one big case, and then the clerks can ask what they want. The litigation over the collapse of the Tin Council, for example, has proved a bonanza for a few barristers, with brief fees of £250,000 to £500,000 being agreed.

Even in some quite mundane civil areas there are now too few barristers, and the fees are shooting up accordingly. One effect is that certain areas of litigation are becoming beyond the pockets of ordinary people: only the corporate clients can afford to go to court. "It's really beginning to worry me," says one solicitor in a small firm that does a lot of civil litigation. "It's partly the fault of the solicitors in the big firms, who agree to these enormous fees because it then justifies their own huge charges."

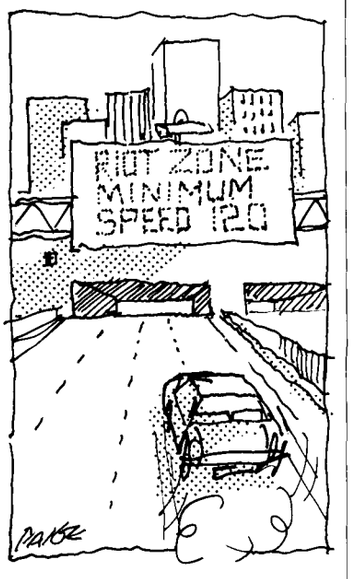
Events like Marre make the Bar retreat into gloomy introspection, whether or not it's warranted. Just before Marre was published, the Lord Chancellor told a conference of barristers: "Don't panic." But a degree of panic may be in order—and not just for the barristers. ●

Lots of talk, but few jobs

Paul Fisher reports on why "business in the community" produces more hype than hope

The Barbican Centre, a high-quality prefabricated township built on scruffy City fringes, is a fine example of local authority-led urban development. In mid-October the Corporation of London will play host to Enterprise and the Inner Cities, a self proclaimed "major conference and exhibition" run by a private company, World Trade Promotions. It will push the prevailing ethic behind the government's confusing policies.

The appeal to join in the fun is couched in the buoyant language of marketing, and a glossy brochure puffs up "the Challenge...the Solution...the Workshops...the Clinics". There's no acknowledgement in this brochure of such Church of England-style observations from *Faith in the City* that "in Urban Priority Areas more than one in four people are forced to live on the margins of poverty or below the threshold of an acceptable standard of living". The publicity is devoid of any appeal to balance "the ethic of altruism against egotism, of community against self-seeking and of charity against greed." No surprise then that the World Trade Promotions "advisory committee", listed on the back of the brochure, reveals no direct church involvement.



The 44-strong committee has representatives from the new government bodies (for example, the Black Country Development Corporation), from finance and industry (for example, Investors in Industry and Conran Roche) and from trade unions, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and the Metropolitan Police. The committee, however, has an ostentatious lack, aside from Strathclyde Regional Council and Solace (the professional association for local chief executives), of local authority representation.

This is hardly surprising for, inevitably, the trade show is a politicised affair. The only colour photo World Trade chose to use in its promo bumf is of Margaret Thatcher. She's seen in caring mode, back-lit to create a halo round the hair-do and to cream up the cheesy complexion. Both the picture and accompanying quotes are lifted from *Action for the Cities*, the government's even glossier brochure which was published on 7 March to all but erase local authorities from its map of urban change—the culmination of a process that started with the abolition of the GLC and Metropolitan authorities.

Between giant quote marks, Thatcher says: "I commend the action programme to all who are seeking opportunities to invest in Britain and revitalise our inner cities." Since winning the last election Mrs Thatcher has found it expedient to be seen to care about the "inner cities", that widely-used euphemism describing the places where the poor live. Despite the economic growth so proudly revealed in the *Action for the Cities* propaganda, the poor stay poor and some are likely riot again this summer. Economic intervention is called for—which places the Tories in an ideological dilemma as government tweaking has to be dressed in private enterprise clothing.

So, in place of local authority power and a coherent regional strategy the government has stitched together a weird patchwork of unelected bodies, notably the Urban Development Corporations, Enterprise Zones, City Action Teams, Task Forces and, most recently, Housing Action Trusts.

Urban Development Corporations in London's Docklands, Merseyside (from 1981) and Manchester, Teeside, Tyne and Wear, the Black Country and Cardiff (from 1986) have enabled Whitehall to usurp local planning control as the price for government money. With the exception of Cardiff, whose then Tory council accepted a UDC on condition it retained a degree of planning control, local authorities initially gave UDCs a cool reception. Of late they have grown more welcoming and Wolverhampton's Labour council has asked for it to be included in an expanded Black Country UDC.

The dockland redevelopment UDCs in London and Merseyside are the subjects of a belated progress report published by National Audit Office in the spring. "The London Dockland Development Corporation's success partly reflects its proximity to central London and deregulation of the City [and] means that its achievements will not readily be repeated elsewhere", said the NAO. Success in London is judged as 10,000 new jobs by 1986, although local unemployment peaked at 5,000 before going down to 4,400 last December. In Liverpool the NAO concluded that "there has only been limited success in job creation."

Fifteen Enterprise Zones have been set up since the Planning and Land Act 1981 and are scheduled for a ten year life span of rates relief and limited planning control. Independent assessment of the less powerful EZs was equally late and equally tepid. When the NAO criticised the "lack of reliable data to draw conclusions

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about... the EZ concept" the government commissioned a report from Cambridge Economic Consultants. The consultants found that the £396 million spent between 1981 and 1986 had created 35,000 extra jobs — £11,000 per job — but that many of these jobs, particularly in the South East, would have been created anyway.

More recent quango-type urban creatures are City Action Teams and Task Forces. The former comprise commando units of civil servants dispatched to the provinces to ginger up local business. The latter are grant shops, interposed between the local and central government and so far 16 of them have committed £13 million to 350 projects. The latest of the government schemes was announced last week with the £125 million programme to set up Housing Action Trusts under the Housing Bill and improve the country's most dismal council estates.

Ian Thomas, at the Association of

"There comes a point when industrialists will turn on their own party and point out that one reason for a government being in power is that it organises welfare, education and housing"

Metropolitan Authorities, defines these initiatives (especially the final three) as ones which elected authorities are far better placed to take. He says: "Action for the Cities is the repackaging of what already existed. Virtually all of the £3,000 million promised there was already earmarked and Nigel Lawson said as much in the House of Commons. There is too great an emphasis on bricks and mortar and not enough on services, infrastructure and training. The extra government bodies have added to the confusion and if local authorities, which have a history of working with the private sector, had been entrusted with the money they would have been in a better position to respond to local demands."

The government repeatedly stresses the responsibility of private industry to "respond to local demands" and implicit in its city policies is that healthy business, as opposed to ramshackle local democracy, will of itself create healthy communities. A nice message to hear at Rotary club dinners but there comes a point, as has been shown by industry's lack of interest in funding Kenneth Baker's City Technology Colleges, when industrialists will turn on their own political party and point out that one reason for a government being in power is that *it* organises welfare, education and public housing. The depth of the corporate pocket is not limitless and appeals to those whose first professional duty is to make profits can only go so far before simple business logic will rebel against being taxed twice over.

The confusions of local politics have been compounded by the introduction of centrally-imposed attempts at solutions. Understanding investment openings in the new cityscape, let alone assessing whether or not they will make Britain a better place to live in, is hard. The Enterprise and the Inner Cities conference, for all its political bias and marketing clap-trap, might be a good place to start finding out.

The seniority of the government minister promised for the grand opening will presumably depend on how much conference and exhibition business the organisers can drum up before the end of the summer. Latest publicity handouts reveal a meagre list of 12 exhibitors, two of them locksmiths and one, curiously, the Institute of Chartered Accountants which says it "considers Enterprise and the Inner Cities as an unrivalled opportunity to demonstrate accountants' commitment and involvement in urban intitiatives".

John Todd, project director and a recent recruit to WTP from Imperial Tobacco, answers questions put to him on the phone by asking his deputy for "clarifications". In his brochure, though, he comes over as as high falutin' as the accountants. "I have been immensely encouraged," he opines, "by the support we have already received from public and private sector alike. The conference will raise the profile of attention on inner city initiatives... and provide a visionary inspiration for the future."

Charles Dickens parodied boosterish cant when, in 1839, he wrote in *Nicholas Nickleby* of those who set up London's United Metropolitan Improved Hot Muffin and Crumpet Baking and Punctual Delivery Company. The nineteenth century case for business led uban redevelopment is put by the UMIHMCBPDC committee whose spokesman says: "The existing state of the muffin trade, as at present constituted, is wholly undeserving of the confidence of the public; and that it deems the whole Muffin system prejudicial to the health and morals of the people, and subversive of the best interests of a great commercial and mercantile community."

The muffin venture did not fare very well.

Why poll tax will make the poor subsidise the rich

John Rentoul and Julian Le Grand chronicle new evasions from Nicholas Ridley

The Poll Tax is fair because the rich send their children to private schools. That's one of Environment Secretary Nicholas Ridley's argument against an article (*New Statesman*, 22 April) which reported new evidence that the rich benefit more than the poor from local council services. We argued that if the poll tax really were a "community charge" — a charge for services — then the rich ought to pay more than the poor, as they currently do with rates.

Ridley has produced a detailed reply, saying: "It is not true to say that the rich benefit more than the poor from local services. The major items of local authority spending are education and personal social services. Personal social services are of course primarily directed at the less well off. Many people (primarily the better off) choose to send their children to private schools — 7 per cent of school pupils are privately educated—and so on the whole make less use of state education provision than people on low incomes."

While it is welcome to have a Conservative minister acknowledge that private education is used by the better off, instead of claiming that it is open to all, the use of private schools was taken into account in the survey we reported. The effect of a few people opting out of the state system is swamped by the fact that many children of the better off stay on at (state) school after 16, or use state further education colleges.

Ridley says that in his view the survey of Cheshire County Council's

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services "does not support the suggestion that the rich benefit twice as much as the poor from local authority services". He disputes the basis on which the benefits are attributed to different groups, arguing that the benefits from council spending on roads don't only go to people using cars or buses: "The benefits of roads go far wider than this — how else would goods reach the shops, children get to school or dustbins get emptied?"

But would a more detailed analysis produce a significantly different outcome? It seems unlikely. The Cheshire survey did look at assisted travel to school and found that this was one of the most pro-rich of the services examined. And, insofar as consumers benefit from subsidies to industry or retailers, it will be the better off who benefit more — because they consume more.

Ridley also argues that Cheshire is not representative of England as a whole, with a relatively high proportion of children in secondary and non-advanced further education (a pro-rich service) and a relatively low proportion of potential clients for social services (a pro-poor service).

Neither of these differences is great enough to alter the argument (for instance 13 per cent of Cheshire's population is over the age of 65, as against a national average of 15 per cent), and families with children are also big users of social services.

Another point made by Ridley was that rebates were not taken into account. This was because the way in which the rebates would be calculated had not been decided. To make the comparison with rates fair, rate rebates were also not included. Since rate rebates are likely to be more progressive than poll tax rebates, including them would probably reinforce the argument that rates would make a better "community charge" than the poll tax.

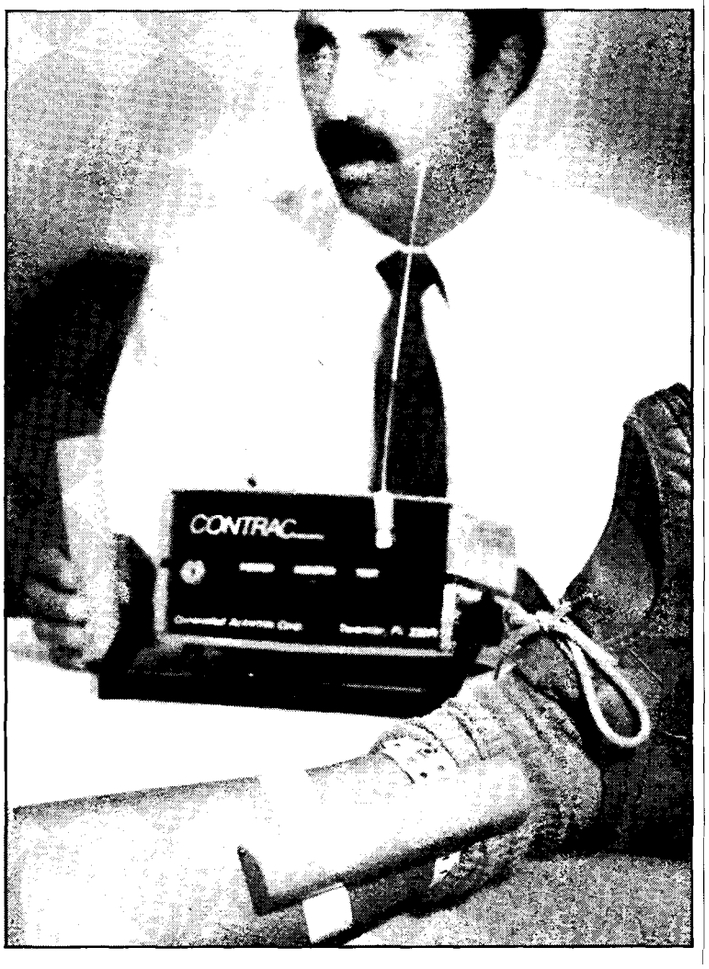
As a parting shot, Ridley adds: "Incidentally, if it were true that the rich derive more from local services than the poor, I suppose one might expect socialists to be in favour of cutting services and reducing spending on them. I have seen no evidence of any such notion — as yet!"

In fact, many thoughtful socialists *have* advocated switching public spending from middle-class services to ones that benefit the poor. And there is no case for making things worse by bringing in a regressive tax and pretending it is a "charge" for services delivered.

Julian Le Grand is Professor of Public Policy at Bristol University and was a consultant to the Cheshire study. John Rentoul is now a reporter for the BBC's On The Record

The privatisation of punishment

Roger Matthews explores some of the unanswered questions raised by the new Green Paper on alternatives to custody



Associated Press

The government's Green Paper on "punishment in the community" published this week, which proposes limited experiments with electronic "tagging", is good news for companies like Racal Chubb and Marconi, who see it as a potentially nice little earner. (And, if offenders can be persuaded to pay for the hire of the surveillance equipment themselves, then the Treasury will be happy too.) But it doesn't resolve a profound ambivalence in government circles about what tagging is actually *for*.

On the one hand it's proposed that it should be used as a way of extending early release; on the other it's seen as a sentencing option in itself. Both strategies may be ultimately concerned with reducing the prison population—but there's little recognition that the *point* where the sanction is applied within the criminal justice system is crucial to its effectiveness.

As a sentencing option tagging is on very weak ground. Judges and magistrates have plenty of sentencing options already, and the chances are that it would simply be used as an "alternative" to existing alternatives. Douglas Hurd is aware that many of these were never really conceived of as realistic alternatives to custody and that they are used for people who were never likely to receive a custodial sentence. (It does, however, open up some novel possibilities: in California last a year a Rachman-type landlord who had been convicted of letting off run-down properties at exorbitant rents was sentenced to a year's house arrest—in one of his own dilapidated dwellings.)

As a form of early release tagging has greater scope to reduce prison overcrowding—but also greater dangers. It's quite possible even now to release people early without putting them under house arrest. But, as when parole was introduced, judges may simply "compensate" for "premature" release by imposing stiffer sentences in the first place.

The problem of developing and implementing effective alternatives to prison (the Green Paper also proposes stricter community service orders, and greater use of compensation orders and community service) is not entirely one of satisfying the judiciary's unquenchable thirst for punishment. The difficulty lies in ensuring that the new sanctions are applied in the ways intended. But in a system where judges and magistrates are given a virtually free hand to sentence as they please, there is little possibility of making sure this happens.

Even if judges are brought under control and tagging is introduced as part of a rational sentencing policy—and the Green Paper's lack of specificity gives little cause for hope on this point—it still has major drawbacks. The evidence from America is that a significant percentage of those who spend along time under house arrest sufferfrom severe depression, alcohol and drug abuse, and serious domestic conflicts.

It also shifts the burden of punishment onto the female members of the household. The problems of checking up on and replacing defective equipment, of tracing and tracking down offenders who break the curfew, resolving domestic disputes and mopping up personal tragedies, mean that we could all end up paying dearly for the privatisation of punishment.

The simultaneous and continuing expansion of the prison system suggests that the government is not over-confident in the ability of its newly-proposed measures to reduce the prison population. In fact, it seems to be pursuing a policy which seeks rehabilitation and reparation for one group of minor offenders—burglars and those convicted of minor property crimes—while the others are locked up for increasingly long terms in debilitating prisons.

But isn't it the most serious and disturbed offenders who need social rehabilitation rather than segregation? Maybe we should also be thinking of ways of introducing the community into prison rather than extending the prison into the community.

Roger Matthews is a lecturer at Middlesex Polytechnic's Centre for Criminology

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Committee to back internal markets

The Commons' Social Services Select Committee is about to surprise the Prime Minister next week by recommending pilot schemes as possible forerunners for internal markets in the NHS.

This is certain to be a central recommendation in the Prime Minister's own review into the future of the health service, expected in the autumn, probably to be trailed at the Conservative Party conference in October. Social Services Secretary John Moore and his deputy Tony Newton, both of whom serve on the Thatcher review team (with Nigel Lawson, Chief Secretary John Major and the Prime Minister's adviser in these matters, Sir Roy Griffiths) review team are known to be in favour.

Just for once, it is conceivable that the Prime Minister and her colleagues will be quoting the usually hostile (but Tory-dominated) Social Services Select Committee in support of their arguments. Select Committee reports are often dismissed by the government, but the Social Services Committee has been carefully examining many of the same witnesses who have been giving evidence to the Thatcher inquiry and ministers are bound, this time, to pay careful attention to what is said.

The Committee leaves open the question of whether there should be a true internal market in which the patients who go to a hospital outside their area take with them the fee for the treatment. At present payments are made when patients cross boundaries, but the delay can be two years and this is not what the Select Committee or government envisage. Labour MPs are worried that payments across boundaries could lead to some district hospital authorities denuding themselves of basic services they should keep. Tories acknowledge the danger, but believe it can be overcome by regulation.

The Committee will reject tax relief for private insurance schemes, even for the elderly. Nigel Lawson will be grateful for support here. He has been arguing that tax relief would mean loss of revenue for the Treasury without necessarily increasing spending on health care. And he is understood to have had backing in the review team from Sir Roy Griffiths. The Committee will also to come down against a specific health tax. The case for it is that the public would more happily pay a bigger tax for health care, but the Select Committee fears it could be taken over by the Treasury for more general use.

It is also proposing the scrapping of the 14 regional hospital boards. It recognises the need for some strategic planning, but thinks this can be done by a grouping of the 190 district health authorities. The present system of regional and district health authorities is criticised for wasteful duplication. Family Practitioner Committees would also disappear. Their functions would be "merged" with the district health authorities. *John Lewis*

Drugs guru calls for rethink

Devoting 34 years of one's life to the civil service is not a formula for radicalisation. Indeed, Bing Spear certainly conforms to the superficial outlines of the stereotype: *Telegraph* reading, sub-fusc in appearance, and living in retirement in Surrey.

But Spear is a unique figure in the field of drug control. Formerly chief inspector of the Home Office drugs branch, he distinguished himself by getting out of the office and gumshoeing around the pharmacies of the West End to make direct contact with those involved in the nascent drug scene of the fifties and sixties.

The conclusions he has drawn from that experience were aired in a speech given at the tenth AGM of the City Roads drug agency in London this week. Spear stressed that in aligning himself with the heretics, he was not advocating decriminalisation of drugs. His target was the so-called War On Drugs being waged by America and her allies. Pointing out that drug use seems to be increasing everywhere, despite all the strategies used to curtail it, he asked whether "if we are supposedly fighting a war, which we are manifestly not winning, is it not logical and reasonable to suggest that the Rules of Engagement might at least be reviewed?"

He was scornful about a Home Office press release containing the "hoary old chestnut" about progression from cannabis to heroin and argued that comparing traffickers to slave traders "does little to enhance the credibility of the Minister of the Crown responsible", Douglas Hogg. The essence of what Spear wants is "a completely fresh and fundamental look... at all the issues raised by substance use in late twentieth century society." He insists that "someone has to be the first to break out of the straight jacket of American thinking." That someone, he believes, should be Britain. *Marek Kohn*

Social work jobs at risk over police row

Tower Hamlets council in London may have to stop recruiting social services staff who work with children, as a result of a row with the Metropolitan police over vetting staff for possible criminal records.

For the past two years, councils have been allowed access, under Home Office guidelines, to police records of potential social workers, child minders and foster parents. But now the Met is asking to be indemnified against any mistakes or negligence on its part when it hands over such information. If the police supply damagingly incorrect information about a person from the Police National Computer, then that person can sue the police under the Data Protection Act. But the council is refusing to indemnify the police against their own mistakes.

According to a Tower Hamlets spokesperson: "the borough solicitor said that this was absolutely ludicrous. He said he had never heard of anyone being indemnified against their own negligence." But a police spokesperson says that the council is being "particularly pedantic" over the issue and is the only authority not to accept the police stance.

The council is approaching the Home Office to try to get the police to accept responsibility for their own records. If the matter can't be sorted out, says a spokesperson, "we may have to consider putting a freeze on the appointment of staff."

WELFARE WATCH

Is a sixteen-year-old an adult or a child? Sometimes it affects parents' benefits

Should a sixteen-year-old help with the housework? When the old supplementary benefit regulations were still in force, the answer sometimes used to affect the parents' entitlement to both weekly benefit and single payments for washing machines. Since 11 April it may affect the transitional additions payable where income support would otherwise be less than the old supplementary benefit.

A recent decision on this subject (CSB/783/1987) by the chief social security commissioner, Judge Bromley, is therefore of more than historical interest and could mean that many people are entitled to more income support as well as arrears of supplementary benefit—possibly hundreds of pounds. It is the latest of a series of conflicting decisions.

What the commissioners had to decide was not how young people *ought* to behave (on that, no doubt, they would have been unanimimous), but how the regulations assumed they would behave. It all depended on the meaning of "adult". A condition for claiming an allowance for domestic assistance was that "ordinary domestic tasks" could not be carried out by any adult in the family. Similarly, a disabled person could be refused a laundry addition or a grant for a washing machine if there was an able-bodied adult in the household.

The regulations did not define "adult" but they did, and still do, define a child as a person under 16, allowing 16-year-olds to claim benefit in their own right once they have left school (a right which most of them will lose in September). It was presumably this that led a commissioner, in 1982, to decide that a claimant's son aged 16 was "obviously an adult member of the household" with the result that a payment could not be made for repair of a washing machine. Another commissioner, in a laundry addition case in 1985, decided that anyone who was not a child must be an adult, adding (in an unjudicial aside) that "it would not be unreasonable to expect a person aged 16 or over to be capable of undertaking laundry duties."

The tide turned when yet another commissioner decided, this time in a domestic assistance case, that "adult" meant "of full age", i.e. 18 or over. But although subsequent decisions took the same line, the DHSS went on treating people as adult at 16 and therefore refusing laundry and domestic assistance additions.

Presumably Judge Bromley's endorsement of the age-18 definition will force the DHSS to concede defeat. New claimants are not affected, (because laundry and domestic additions no longer exist) but anyone whose claim for a weekly addition or single payment was turned down before 11 April because there was a 16 or 17-year-old in the family should ask for the decision to be reviewed. Arrears can be paid for up to 52 weeks. Sixteen-year-olds will continue to refuse to hang out the washing, but they will no longer be able to quote the social security rules in justification. *Tony Lynes*

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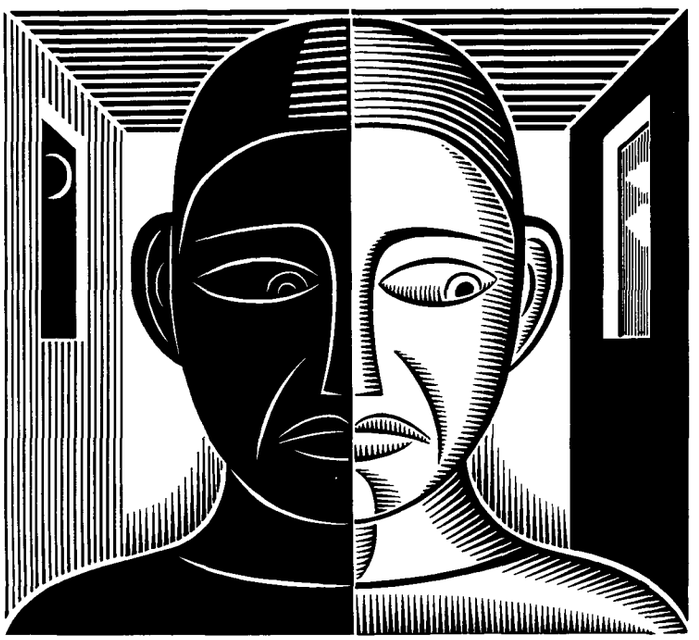
INITIATIVES

Immigration blues

Paul Fisher looks at a group in Newham which helps Asian women to overcome loneliness and despair



Cliff Harper

White prejudice has it that Asians are well able to care for each other through big, cosy families and a shared culture. But many Asians — and particularly women — must cope with an urban life for which their rural childhoods in tight village communities never prepared them.

"Coming from freedom and being jailed", is how Bhamini Akhoonjee describes the experience of many Asian women who immigrate to Britain. In 1986 Ms Akhoonjee founded the Newham Asian Women's Group to provide help and counselling to the victims of loneliness and depression. The group, which meets every Thursday, is funded by MIND (the National Association for Mental Health) and by the London borough of Newham. At the meetings the women have a chance to express themselves and share common frustrations.

Kasiben Vora, a first generation Indian immigrant in her late thirties, has been cured of her symptoms and no longer needs to attend the group. "An Asian psychiatric nurse sent her to us," says Ms Akhoonjee. "At first she didn't want to know and rocked in her chair making funny noises. She had voices in her head and felt something living in her body." The referral came after the double humiliation of revealing her symptoms of schizophrenia to a white male doctor with her 12-year-old son as interpreter.

"Some women go through so many agencies and come to us in a worse state than they need be."

Kasiben Vora temporarily left the group when her husband took her to the Molvee, the local priest. He gave her necklaces to wear and instructions not to visit anyone's house, and not to drink from their cups or eat from their plates. "It didn't help her," says Ms Akhoonjee.

Ms Akhoonjee is critical of local doctors who fail to display posters for the women's group in their waiting rooms. These are written in Gujurati, Hindi and Punjabi and illustrated with a picture of a woman emerging from a shell. "Many of the problems start within the community. GPs have been contacted again and again and asked to display our posters. They are not doing enough to help people like us help the women. Some go through so many agencies and come to us in a worse state than they need be."

Ninety women have attended the group since it started. Ms Akhoonjee says, "Not all our women are 'cured'. Of course not. I think of us as a ladder and you don't have to climb all the steps." Getting Asian women to the foot of the ladder is difficult and several rules have evolved.

From the beginning Asian languages were spoken. Visits to the home before attending the group are essential if husbands' suspicions are to be allayed. "For most of the women, their husband is their base and we don't want to undermine that," says Ms Akhoonjee. At the home visits she assures the families that no men are involved.

Convincing the Asian community that no stigma attaches to admitting mental distress is the second, and most difficult, part of Ms Akhoonjee's role. Here she confronts a cultural divide which can be especially wide among tradition-bound first generation immigrant families. "It's time," she says, "that parents and youngsters conquered conflicts by understanding each other instead of exploding. There has to be compromise. I don't see that happening for a long time to come."

Bhamini Akhoonjee, Asian Women's Group, Newham MIND 01–555 9070.

TAILGUNNER PARKINSON

"Baroness Barbara Wootton, who died last week, loved publicity. As she evangelically *did not* believe in the Kingdom of Heaven, she perhaps thought that being openly praised on earth was the nearest she'd get to immortality.

I met the Baroness in an unexpected way and perhaps she was not wholly unaware at the time that it might bring her into the limelight.

In 1977 the Chief Probation Officer for Inner London was a man called William Pearce. Pearce was a bully, and though it would be easy to judge him harshly, it has to be said in his favour that this failing was not without its positive features. You see, Pearce was prone to periodic bouts of profound self-doubt, but after he'd spent an afternoon smashing the ego of one of his basic grade staff, his mental health was said to improve beyond all recognition.

When in that particular year I wrote an article for *New Society* saying that if violent criminals could be converted into petty fiddlers, then the public wouldn't be getting such a bad deal. Pearce promptly had me up to HQ, suspended me and then arranged to have me brought before a tribunal in the hope of seeing me ceremoniously sacked.

Things looked gloomy until onto the scene came the 80-year-old Baroness. She said she had read my writings on criminality and had some sympathy with my views.

Pearce was clearly put out by my having such big gun support. When I arrived at HQ to face the accusation of bringing the service into disrepute he was in an odd, distracted, near-giggly mood. "We'd better get a chair for her ladyship," he said with a wink in his voice. "We don't want her to drop dead, do we?" I gave a grunt like a pig in labour.

A posse of my criminal clients had assembled in the waiting room to give me their support. One former armed robber said he would help me by telling the tribunal I'd harboured him while he was on the run. This generous offer was wholly untrue and could have led to my instant incarceration. "For Christ's sake only tell the truth," I begged, and fortunately he saved my bacon by doing so.

The Baroness seated herself comfortably in the middle of this Beggar's Opera and was soon chatting away with all and sundry. And after the hearing all the lads agreed that she was "a real game old bird".

For her part, Barbara Wootton generously celebrated my reinstatement by sending me a copy of her autobiography. We thereafter exchanged a couple of letters; but then at Christmas I made the mistake of sending her a Good Wishes card. I think it may have sniffed of belief in "life after death" in her eyes, and I heard no more."

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DATABASE

Trade unions

For many people the Trade Union Congress is synonymous with trade unions. In fact, only just over a quarter of all unions in 1986 were affiliated to the TUC: 88 out of 335.

Mergers have produced a steady decline in the total number of unions throughout the century. In 1896, for instance, there were 1,358 unions. Only 13 per cent of these were in the TUC. The trend amongst both TUC affiliates and non-affiliates shows every sign of continuing.

Mergers are of two kinds. The first is between unions of roughly comparable size. The biggest merger of this type so far in 1988 was between the Association of Scientific Technical and Managerial Staffs and TASS, to form the 650,000-strong Manufacturing Science and Finance (MSF).

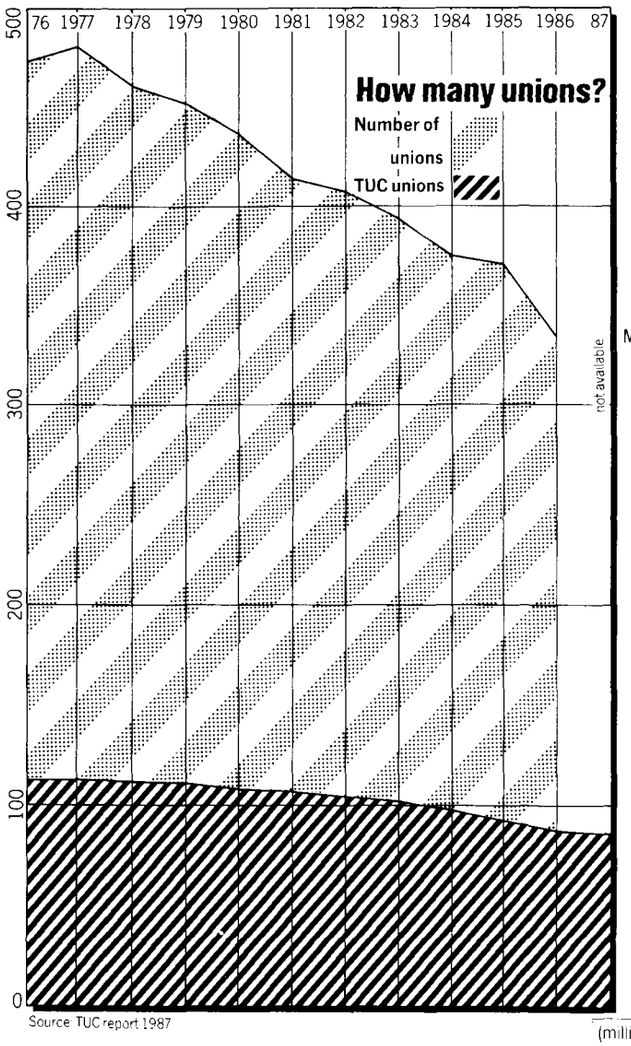
Other mergers on the horizon are the engineering union (AEU) with the electricians (EETPU), and the local government officers (NALGO) with the public employees' union (NUPE).

A second kind of merger is where a large union swallows up a smaller one. Thirty local and craft unions transferred to national unions during 1986. Four unions ceased to exist as a result of mergers last year. For instance, the 1,700-strong Amalgamated Union of Asphalt Workers merged with TGWU, which has 1.3 million members.

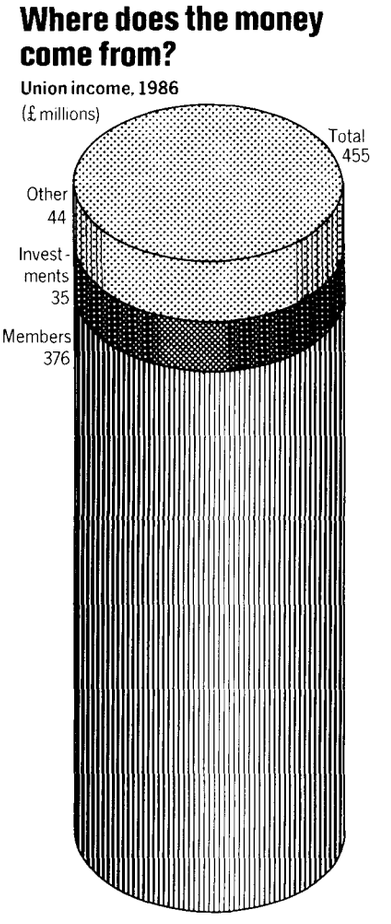
In contrast with previous decades, the pattern of mergers suggests a defensive rather than an expansionist purpose. The proportion of the labour force in trade unions fell below half in 1987, and many unions are continuing to lose members. The biggest three unions (TGWU, AEU, and GMB) lost 80,000 between them last year alone. In this climate mergers are an attractive way of boosting the profile and morale of unions.

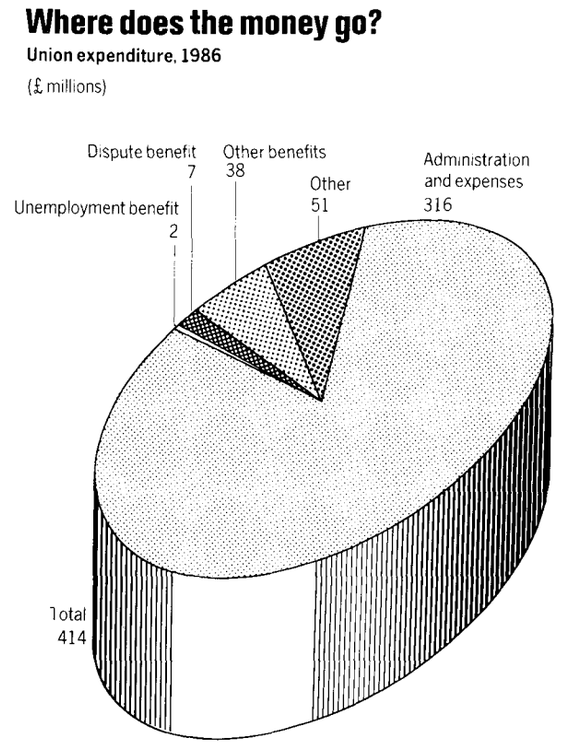
With the expected expulsion of the EETPU from the TUC in September, there is increasing interest in the state of non-TUC unionism. The EETPU would then be the largest non-TUC union with 330,000 members, surpassing the Royal College of Nursing, with more than a quarter of a million members. Only two other non-affiliates were among the 24 unions with more than 100,000 members in 1986.

There are several umbrella organisations for unions outside the TUC. The Federation of Managerial Professional and General Associations (MPG) firmly rejects the label of an alternative TUC. But its 16 "participating organisations" are all non-TUC unions. *James Stephenson*

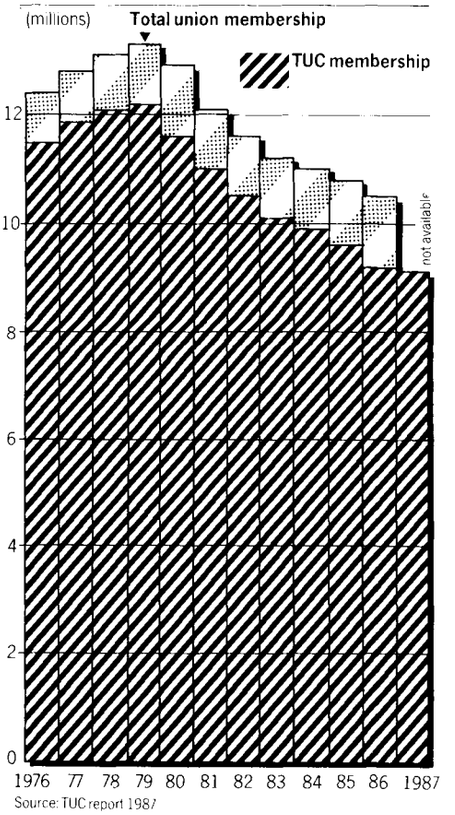


Source TUC report 1987





Source: *Annual Report of the Certification Officer, 1987*



Source: TUC report 1987

Tony Garrett

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ESSAY

Getting away with murder

Michael Bennett

What if fantasies as much as reason shape our politics? What if Margaret Thatcher's power derives in part from the repugnance she inspires? Jacqueline Rose examines Thatcher's curious embodiment of the violence of the state by reference to the case of Ruth Ellis, the last woman to be hanged for murder in Britain

The political is often analysed as though it were free of psychic and sexual processes. The ascendancy of Margaret Thatcher and resurgence of right-wing ideologies seems the appropriate moment to take up this issue—a moment when we find ourselves witnessing the pressures of fantasy on our collective political life. Something about Thatcher's place in the collective imaginary of British culture calls out for an understanding of what she releases by dint of being a woman, and of the forms of fantasy which she brings into play. Is there

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Camera Press

something in those fantasies which touches on the extremest edge of society, and does she perhaps draw part of her power from the way that she operates, or appears to operate, in that space?

The political writer Stuart Hall has argued that the Conservative electoral victories need to be understood not just in terms of material interest, but in terms of images and identifications. Political identities were formed not just on the basis of "so-called 'real' majorities but on (equally real) 'symbolic' majorities." Politics, he was effectively arguing, is not only but also a matter of fantasies, in which the way that people "imagine" themselves occupies a crucial place. His analysis picked up a problem which has a history going back at least to the 1930s, when the left had to ask itself why, in the face of increasing political oppression, very many people, including those who are most exploited, move not to the left but to the right. Thatcherism—and the analogy is more than gratuitous—forces us up against something which Wilhelm Reich was the first to call the mass psychology of fascism.

Hall's argument is crucial, but it remains within the framework of rational calculation. Voters, he argued, identify not with their immediate material conditions, however bad, but with the idea of their long-term self interest — meaning the place from which they can see themselves potentially making good. The argument could therefore be criticised on the grounds that many people hated the image of Thatcherism but voted for her policies as most likely to secure that good. But what if Thatcher was re-elected not despite the repugnance that many feel for her image, but also in some sense because of it? What if that forceful identity for which she is so severely castigated somewhere also operates as a kind of pull?

The centrality of Thatcher to this political moment, therefore, obliges us to take up the legacy of the debate about fantasy and the right, but it throws in a new question: what it might be about a woman in power that brings us up against the furthest, and most perverse extremities of society itself? The difficulty is that any discussion of Thatcher which relates specifically to her as a woman constantly risks a slide into misogyny, although the question seems impossible to avoid.

Let's take just one issue—Thatcher's support for the restoration of capital punishment. It is a particularly difficult issue, for the woman supporter of capital punishment is as grotesque for the dominant stereotypes of femininity as it is for the feminist critique of the state as the embodiment of phallic power. We should not forget, however, that in 1983 Thatcher initiated the debate on capital punishment after an election result secured by the Falklands victory. Her resolute pursuit of war seemed to turn her from the most unpopular Prime Minister since the last world war to one guaranteed a return to power. In that second election at least, there can be no doubt that one of the things which Thatcher stood for was the desirability of war. The issue of capital punishment plays on that scenario, and extends it.

> *Ruth Ellis seemed to release that peculiar pleasure which the idea of execution always provokes*

Ruth Ellis was the last woman to hang in England. She died in 1955. In the 1983 hanging debate she was suddenly brought back to public attention. Ruth Ellis was not the last person to be executed in England but in the publicity over the vote and the accompanying debate, her image was central, with film and photographs of protests at her hanging appearing on television and in the press. Renée Short referred in the House of Commons to the "judicial murder" of Ruth Ellis as the event which had brought the enormity of capital punishment home to the country as a whole. It was of course because Ellis was a woman that she aroused this interest which appeared more and more as curiosity, both about the spectacle of hanging as well as about the sexual nature of her crime (she shot her lover).

Ruth Ellis, or rather the focus of her, seemed to be demonstrating the power of spectacle, femininity and violence, and their mutual association, in public fantasy life. The mobilisation of Ellis for the case against state violence found itself repeating the drama of the original event. Death by hanging became a symbol of contention centring on two women: Thatcher who supports the restoration of capital punishment;

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and Ellis, who was called upon to demonstrate its inhumanity, but who seemed equally to release something of that peculiar pleasure which the idea of execution always seems to provoke.

In one sense, there is no common point or even dialogue between these two women: from different historical moments and opposite ends of the social spectrum, they stand respectively for criminality and the law—Thatcher was a barrister before, and during the early stages of her political career.

Yet Margaret Thatcher and Ruth Ellis were brought together at this historical moment in a scenario whose fantasy character may well be what constitutes its importance and force. "Victim" and "executioner", they meet at that point of violence where the ordering of society reveals something of the paradox on which it is based: the fact that civilisation, as Freud puts it, "hopes to prevent the crudest excesses of violence by itself assuming the right to use violence against criminals".

The trial of Ruth Ellis was described at the time as "one of the most one-sided legal battles ever to be fought in the number one court". She was convinced by all accounts at the moment when she stated in court that she had "a peculiar feeling I wanted to kill him", repeating on questioning, "I had an idea I wanted to kill him." Ellis felt "supremely justified" and this clarity on her part destroyed any possibility of reducing the charge from murder to manslaughter. She would only have been found not guilty if she had been "emotionally disturbed" with her "judgment unseated", or in other words, out of her mind.

Ellis's rationality clearly threatened a crisis of sexual difference. The psychiatrist called by the defence testified that, "The effect of jealousy upon a female mind can so work as to unseat the reason and can operate to a degree in which a male mind is quite incapable of operating." Women, he argued, are "inclined to lose some of their inhibitory capacity and solve their problems on a more primitive level. This is not applying to women in general, but if they do have hysterical reactions, they are more prone to hysterical reactions than men." The problem with Ruth Ellis was that she was not hysterical *enough*. As a woman she failed to mobilise a stereotype in her own defence. She was outside the bounds of the law and of conventional expectation only by being not quite far outside enough.

What we can see here is the way femininity is being used to draw a line around the limits of what a society will recognise of itself. Femininity, like insanity, is a type of mitigating circumstance. People who commit murder must be feminine or out of control. Because it did not guarantee this definition of violence, because it would not respect the existing conceptual boundaries, Ellis's femininity could appear only as an outrage, as something inappropriate and out of place, like the peroxide she insisted on for her hair for her appearance in court. If not essence, femininity can only be trapping or mere show.

The response to the case of Ruth Ellis was a realignment of the terms of criminality, reason

'What is it about a woman in power that brings us up against the most perverse extremities of society?'

and madness on which the judgment had turned, terms organised so as to secure an image of the social order, but which the spectacle of the trial and execution had instead seemed to question, or even undermine. Thus the year after her trial, the Conservative government was defeated on an opposition motion to abolish capital punishment, having defeated such a motion just months before the trial. Although the vote was overturned in the Lords and capital punishment was not finally abolished until 1969, most commentaries see the execution of Ruth Ellis as decisive in bringing about its eventual abolition. Furthermore, the law on criminal responsibility was altered by a new Homicide Act which introduced the category of "diminished responsibility"—a borderline category in the legal definition of reason. It is the only instance in law which allows partial responsibility for a criminal act.

The trial and execution of Ruth Ellis seemed, therefore, to have tested the limits of a set of key concepts through which we secure the "sanity" of our collective social life. The irony is that Margaret Thatcher would return to the issue of capital punishment, calling up the collective memory of Ruth Ellis in the process, as part of an attempt to put back in place the very terms which that earlier moment had put so definitively under threat.

Horror at the execution of a woman also played a crucial part in the rejection of capital punishment; as if the thinness of that boundary between criminal and legal murder, the uncomfortable proximity between them, presents itself too starkly when it is a woman who is executed. As if the spectacle of execution is too powerful when it is a woman, because her status precisely as spectacle in the more general culture threatens to turn this moment of a society's more precarious self-regulation into show.

Clearly the issue of capital punishment poses one of the greatest threats to the most basic of social differentiations because of this strange sense of identity between punishment and crime. Each time the Conservatives return to this issue (what has become by now the obligatory annual vote), they place under considerable strain the symbolic limits that a "civilised" society draws around itself. One Tory MP this year described the debate as a "good red meat issue" which "gives us something to chew on".

If capital punishment is "barbaric", however, the desire for its restoration tends in the west to be a characteristic of extreme right-wing governments standing for the fullest authority of the state. In the strictest sense, therefore, the issue of capital punishment under Thatcher sets the limits to the anti-state rhetoric which she so consistently deploys.

Returning to Margaret Thatcher, we can perhaps see now something of the extraordinary nature of having a woman in power who unequivocally supports the return of capital punishment, a woman who chooses to embody the state at that very point where it rests its authority on the right to kill; but who does so by means of a language which is one of consistency, rationality and control. One of the things that Thatcher presents us with is an inflated version of the rationality which can be the only basis for distinguishing between legal and illegal violence. For if the law partly allows for the murderer who is deemed to be out of her or his mind, punishing above all a violence which stems from rational calculation, it is also because "rational" violence is the form of violence which it reserves to itself. It is her utter certainty of judgment which allows Thatcher to release into our public fantasy life, with no risk of confusion, the violence that underpins the authority of the state.

As feminism increasingly identifies the forms of violence against women, it has sometimes come to repeat a more familiar stereotype of femininity as something opposed to violence in itself. In this context what Thatcher presents us with is particularly disturbing and grotesque—a femininity which does not serve to neutralise violence, but allows for its legitimation.

One of the key aspects of Thatcher's image is, then, this symbolic legitimation and rationalisation of violence. That this can be the case at the same time as the Conservatives mount their official onslaught against media violence and crime merely demonstrates that structure of necessary antagonism which inheres in rationality itself. Writing on American politics, US historian Richard Hofstadter described this mechanism as the "paranoid style" which produces out of its own system an enemy of supercompetence whose "plots long hatched and deeply pre-meditated" mirror its own supreme and deadly rationality in reverse. Murderers who pre-meditate are, therefore, the most

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dangerous because they too closely resemble the symbolic and psychic structure written into the legal apparatus that comes to meet them.

It has become something of a commonplace to talk of Thatcher's investment in her own supreme logic and consistency, the way that she elevates these concepts to the status of general policy and object of desire. It is this quality that is picked up by commentators on Thatcher's style, whether "for": "we will have one of the most logical governments this country has ever had"; or "against": "The picture of consistent certainty is a complete one. The fact that it is so free of doubt is unnerving. The fact that it is so well remembered is puzzling. The fact that it is so freely given, and yet in so limited and circumscribed a form, is faintly frightening...The self-assurance, the assured recollection and presentation of self, in one who keeps no diary, retains no personal papers, deals always and emphatically in the present, is itself a kind of consistency. (Bruce Arnold, *Margaret Thatcher—A Study in Power*).

It sounds remarkably like Hofstadter: "It is nothing if not coherent, far more coherent than the real world, no room for mistakes, failures, ambiguities, if not rational, intensely rationalistic."

The conviction politician, by her own definition, Thatcher makes of her own logic, and of logic itself, a type of personality and political cult. The image is uncannily close to that of Ruth Ellis ("she felt completely justified") standing in the dock "firm, erect and unafraid" (for one correspondent this in itself was enough to condemn her). Two women, therefore, who present the image alternatively of an acceptable and threatening form of reason in excess. Unless it is the case that, according to a logic which is proper to reason, the acceptable form of reason is not opposed to the threatening, but depends on it.

For Hofstadter, is is precisely that superrationality which then releases the paranoid mode. This is Thatcher herself:

"We must become aware of the way in which our daily lives, our own thinking, may have become affected, become tainted without our ever realising it, by the ceaseless flood of socialist and pseudo-socialist propaganda to which we have been exposed for so long...The decline of contemporary thought has been hastened by the misty phantom of socialism...Socialism has lured [people's] conscience into thinking that the steamroller which is about to flatten them is a blessing in disguise." (1976); and
"The British character has done so much for democracy, for law, and done so much throughout the world, that if there is any fear that it might be swamped people are going to react...the moment the minority threatens to become a big one, people get frightened." (1978)

Power in the adversarial mode—Thatcher seems to be repeating here one of the fundamental psychic tropes of fascism, which acts out this structure of aggressiveness, giving name and place to the invisible adversary which is an inherent part of it, and making, as she does, fear a central component of strategy: "People get frightened...we are not here to ignore people's wishes." It does not take much to reorganise the semantics of that sentence and to read it as stating that fear in itself is an object of desire. The Falklands war, therefore, simply brought to its logical conclusion a rhetoric whose basic terms were already firmly in place. The message seems to be, as is the case with paranoia: we have every reason to be frightened, we have everything firmly under control. It is on the back of this that Thatcher reopened the question of capital punishment, making explicit the violence on which such a message always relies.

Thatcherism cannot simply be equated with fascism (the preservation of democratic government, the support of the free market, the rhetoric—at least—of the rolling back of the state), although there are of course points of connection that can be made (the glorification of nationhood, the assault on homosexuals, the destruction of local government, and the increasing centralisation—despite the rhetoric—of state power). More important, the retributive violence of her ethical absolutism echoes a central component of what Wilhelm Reich, writing on fascism in the 1930s, and others have described. Crucially, the phenomenon of Thatcher suggests that our understanding of the libidinal undercurrents of political process can no longer be restricted to the historically recognised moment of fascism alone.

Thatcher chooses to embody the state at the very point where it rests its authority on the right to kill

Traditionally, fascism is frequently described as something irrational. For me, however, it is not the irrationality of Thatcher's rhetoric which strikes me as the problem, but its supreme rationalism, the way that it harnesses fantasy to reason, giving reason to what I want to call the "psychic flashpoints of the social", the very point where reason itself is at its most insecure.

It seems to me, then, to be limiting to talk of images and identifications in relation to politics as if what we are dealing with belongs to a straightforward economy of desire. Desire may well be the necessary term, but only if we define it as something which includes—not irrationality, but a logic of fantasy in which violence can operate as a pole of attraction at the same time as, or rather to the precise extent that, it is being denied. One of the things that Margaret Thatcher is doing, or that is being done through her, is to make this paradox the basis of a political identity so that we can take pleasure in violence as force and legitimacy while always locating "real" violence somewhere else (illegitimate violence and illicit behaviour increasingly made subject to the law).

And Thatcher's femininity? By which I mean the way she presents herself as a woman (or not). We can only note the contradictions—from denial: "People are more conscious of me being a woman than *I* am of being a woman"; through an embracing of the most phallic of self-images: the iron lady; to the insistence on her femininity as utterly banal: the housewife managing the purse-strings of the nation. Predictably, these images are mirrored and exceeded in the misogynistic reactions which she provokes: "doubtful whether any male PM would have actually seen that Falklands thing through to the end". "in practice, as sentimental as a Black Widow".

But it is nonetheless the case that Margaret Thatcher deliberately chooses to situate herself in the place of such an ambiguous sexual self-fashioning. The paranoid structure which I am describing here no doubt thrives on such an ambiguity, one in which femininity is something alternatively appealed to and denied, and masculinity is simultaneously parodied and inflated. It is the worst of a phallic identity, countered, and thereby rendered permissible, by being presented as masquerade.

For a feminism which has argued for the perversity and even deadliness of the social order, and then called it male, Thatcher presents a particular difficulty and anxiety which has perhaps been operating in the form of taboo. In the scenario I have tried to outline here, the fact that Thatcher is a woman is allowing her to get away with murder.

None of this is to deny the "rational" reasons why people may have voted for Thatcher, nor indeed to give to anything I have described here the status of single political determinant or cause. It is, however, to point to a realm no less politically important for not being containable in these terms.

This essay is adapted from a longer essay to be published in "New Formations", winter 1988-89 (Routledge). See also Jenny Diski's review of the case of Edith Thompson (Books, page 39)

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John Topham Picture Library

Jailed for a week: Bertrand Russell, aged 89, follows his wife into Bow Street, 1961

A man of words and deeds

BERTRAND RUSSELL: A POLITICAL LIFE
Alan Ryan
Allen Lane £16.95

Paul Foot

When Alan Ryan first read Bertrand Russell, and was told by a teacher that Russell was "an old fool", he concluded to the contrary: that Russell was "a very good thing".

Nothing in this admirable little book deflects from that conclusion. Bertrand Russell was indeed "a very good thing". He was a patrician rebel with a deep contempt for orthodoxy of every kind. He wrote with the sublime confidence of the Whig upper class from which he came. He had about him that spirit of defiance which moved the early 19th century radical publishers to *seek out* prosecution. He never missed an opportunity to drop uproarious abuse on the "wicked men" who governed society. He was one of the bravest resisters during the first world war, and campaigned successfully against the government's persecution of conscientious objectors. He hated religion of every kind. *Why I Am Not a Christian* is perhaps the most powerful piece of propaganda against the Christian religion ever published in the English language. His mockery over Jesus Christ's revenge on the unfortunate fig tree which dares to refuse to bear fruit for the Son of God has stuck in my mind for a quarter of a century.

He hated taboos of every description, especially sexual taboos. He was, during the first decade of the century, a keen women's suffragist and stood for parliament on that single issue. All his writings on all these subjects are as easy to read and as relevant today as they were when they were written. His gigantic intellect, his bubbling sense of humour and, above all, his zest for life are infectious, even, in parts, irresistible. Anyone interested in politics who has not read Bertrand Russell is the weaker and worse informed for it.

But there was another Bertrand Russell, a respectable Russell and sometimes a downright reactionary Russell. Especially in the period after the second world war, the former rebel, somewhat to his surprise and distaste, was adopted and patronised by the society he had mocked. He got an Order of Merit from the King and a Nobel Prize for Literature. Though he ended his life in a blaze of glory, pitting himself

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against the war in Vietnam with all the ferocity of his campaigns in 1914 and 1916 (and being sent to prison for it just as he was then), his attitude to war in the late 1940s was perverse. He developed the fantastic notion that the United States of America, the only country with nuclear weapons, should take over the leadership of the world and, if necessary, force a war with and subjugate Russia before the latter could develop nuclear weapons. After such a war (which he openly encouraged) he proposed a "confederation" of all the world's countries, led by the United States, which would ensure forever a total ban on nuclear weapons.

This promotion of war by the old anti-war campaigner didn't last very long (Russell later claimed that he had only fostered this notion briefly during 1948, which was completely false). He dismissed the idea just as suddenly and lightheartedly as he repudiated his suggestion before the war that Hitler should be allowed to invade Britain without opposition since anything, even a regime of Hitler's, was better than a war. But it exposed the unreliability of Russell as a political thinker, and as a socialist, which for most of his life he claimed to be.

Bertrand Russell was like a firecracker on bonfire night. He kept on exploding in all sorts of unexpected and exciting ways. But in between explosions he would lie silent—silent, for instance, on the General Strike, on unemployment and the economic crisis. He was bored by economics, irritated by organised labour and contemptuous of the Marxist notion that politics is concentrated economics. As Alan Ryan points out, in all Russell's criticism of Marxism he never even tackles its fundamental feature: that capitalism as an economic system does not work, and is a fetter on production. His attacks on Marxism (and on the Russian revolution) begin and end with a critique of the kind of society which socialist revolution will produce. Because he ignores the economics of capitalist production, the cooperation which capitalism demands of workers in production, he cannot address himself to the central case for a socialist society.

Cooperation and interdependence between workers at work—features of capitalist society—can be transformed into cooperation and interdependence in society at large. Instead of cooperating simply to produce—when the result of the production is controlled and distributed by an entirely uncooperative class—workers can cooperate in the control of society. They can decide what is produced and what happens to it. If there is such a thing as a "guarantee" of the freedoms essential to a man like Bertrand Russell in a socialist society, it must be found in the democracy and cooperation which arises from working together. If, however, as Russell does, you ignore the significance of that cooperation, how can you test its value as a guarantor of democracy?

Again and again, Alan Ryan exposes Russell's inconsistencies and even his political dilletantism. Russell's book *Power*, which was presented as though it had answers for most of the political problems on earth, is described here is "anecdotal and fragmentary".

Alan Ryan also lifts the veil on the haughty Whig who lurked behind the passionate reformer. Too often Russell dismissed politics as an argument between enlightened men at the top of society (ably represented by himself) and "wicked" men at the top of society. He had what Ryan calls a "contempt for uneducated people" and a slightly unattractive obsession that they were all motivated by a yearning for "ease" which Russell certainly was not. He "lurches" (Ryan apologises for the word, but it is accurate) "between utopianism and reformism", fashions ideas in his head, publishes them and retracts them often without a glimmer of regret for the *volte face*.

There are times when Alan Ryan's donnish irritation with such inconsistencies almost gets the better of him. In his treatment of Russell's last phase of militancy when he enjoined so many of us to break the law to rid the world of nuclear weapons, he seems almost to be lecturing his subject on the importance of keeping an academic distance from political action. In fact, one of Russell's most attractive features is his absorption in public life and his refusal at any stage to be lured into the cloisters. His last days of action were, in many ways, his finest. Alan Ryan tut-tuts about minutiae—Russell's odd entourage, for instance, or the literary style of his press releases. But in the end Ryan turns on Russell's critics, and hails his boyhood hero as both a man of action *and* a man of thought; a gloriously careless and fearless philosopher *and* an activist whose activity put him twice in jail and lost him countless lucrative fellowships and lectureships.

Russell's greatest contempt, indeed, was for those who were so proud of their brains or abilities that they turned their faces to the wall and "did their own thing".

"The man whose hopes and fears are all centred upon himself can hardly view death with equanimity, since it extinguishes his whole emotional universe...every interest in something outside a man's own body makes his life to that degree impersonal. For this reason, paradoxical as it may seem, a man of wide and vivid interests finds less difficulty in leaving life than is experienced by some miserable hypochondriac whose interests are bound by his own ailments."

That seems to sum up Bertrand Russell—and (I hope) Alan Ryan, too.

Hanged for a 'femme fatale'

CRIMINAL JUSTICE: THE TRUE STORY OF EDITH THOMPSON
Rene Weis
Hamish Hamilton £14.95

Jenny Diski

At 9 am on Wednesday, 13 July 1955, I listened to the hourly pips on the radio (five then, I believe) trying to make sense of the fact that Ruth Ellis was then, at that precise moment, being put to death. I was seven, and I suppose I knew that people I had never met were dying all the time, but this was the first occasion on which I consciously shared the moment of death with another human being. In retrospect I detect the mixture of voyeurism and horror that is probably the inevitable result of judicial murder. In some respect we all share in a calculated death. We use it to practise our own unbelievable end, while at the same time finding satisfaction that when the fifth pip has sounded *we* are still alive.

We're a complex lot and have an understandably complex set of reactions to the tackier aspects of our humanity. Give us a story of illicit love, murder, a courtroom drama, the hanging of a woman *and* the possibility of a miscarriage of justice, and there are few of us who won't be smacking our lips. Better still if the whole thing is so far in the past that most of us weren't even born at the time.

Rene Weis delivers the goods. The newspapers of 1923 hailed Edith Thompson as the "Messalina of Ilford". She was 29 when she and her 22 year old sailor lover, Freddie

Hanged for daydreams: Edith Thompson with (left) Freddie Bywaters and Percy in the garden of 41 Kensington Gardens, Ilford, 10 July 1921

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Bywaters, were hanged for the murder of Thompson's husband Percy. Or rather, Bywaters was hanged for the murder and she for setting it up. The *Daily Sketch* collected close to a million signatures petitioning against the hanging, but there was no reprieve. Edith Thompson, Weis suggests, was hanged for a *femme fatale* on evidence that was very much less than satisfactory; punished for her adulterous liaison with a younger man. She was, he says, a victim of the social and sexual mores of her time.

The evidence used to convict her consisted solely of a series of letters she had written to Bywaters over a period of months, while they were lovers. Weis also uses these letters to construct Thompson's biography and to challenge the verdict. They are essentially pathetic.

Edith Thompson dreamed dreams and read middle-brow romances. In the end these things did for her, mostly, you feel, because of differences of taste between her and the officials of the court. The letters are a disordered jumble of book reviews and fantasies about poisoning her husband; often it's hard to tell where a story line ends and her wish fulfilment begins. She was convicted of confused rambling and silliness, in essence, aided by the careful editing of the letters by the prosecution.

Percy Thompson, who was, in fact, knifed to death by Bywaters, was exhumed and tested for traces of glass or chemical poisoning. Nothing was found, but somehow the mere fact of the testing, along with her girlish semi-jests about putting quinine (yes, quinine!) in Percy's tea, were sufficient to implicate her in the killing. She was a fantasist, and to the very end neither of the lovers was able to believe that she would be hanged for daydreams.

It is a terrible story, but it's also a terrible book. You have to wonder why it was written. Weis tells us it was in order "to contribute" to clearing Thompson's name. In fact the story has been much mulled over and, more to the point, the events occurred 65 years ago. There is a certain lack of urgency in it as an issue. I can think of several more recent deaths at the hand of the state that might better claim our attention if it's causes we're after. Nor, even allowing for the populist rhetoric of our Prime Minister and a few other oddballs, does there appear to be a serious threat of capital punishment returning.

The fact is that a woman—especially a woman—being hanged is good material: it looks like a nicely legitimate issue while providing all the thrills and spills that bestsellers are made of.

The writing is dreadful; maudlin and in a breathless present tense. Try this: "It is dark when mother and daughter enter Shakespeare Crescent arm-in-arm and walk its weary length... The mother puts on the kettle for a cup of tea, and then they sit waiting for the father and brother to return from work. The little home which once held such happiness enhances their sense of enclosed loneliness. Every corner is redolent with memories of the luckless child now lying in a London gaol."

There is also a compulsive attention to detail. In court, Edith is described as sitting "mostly with her left leg crossed over her right". You wonder madly for a second if this will have a bearing on the outcome. Earlier we are told that after her only orgasm with Bywaters she buys fruit and veg and returns home, where her sitting tenant also lives: "The two women probably merely exchange nods." Maybe they did and maybe they didn't, but in either case it turns out to be of absolutely no consequence. I imagine that these and a myriad other irrelevancies are supposed to add authenticity, but it is merely tiresome and distracting, no more than pointless speculation that befuddles the argument.

The description of her death in every second-by-second particular veers dangerously toward the pornographic. Her desperate, drugged fear and the clinical results of the drop are lovingly depicted. I won't distress you with the details. I found them nauseating and unnecessary and, though I accept the fascination we all have with the minutiae of death and sex, especially when death and sex occur together, I would rather not have read it. Weis professes sympathy with Thompson's humiliation at having her intimate letters read out in court. Perhaps the greatest service he could have done the memory of Edith Thompson is to have left her the dignity of privacy in her last, awful, dying moments.

Glory days

THE FUNNY SIDE OF THE STREET
Mike Randall
Bloomsbury £13.95

Sally Vincent

It is typical of "Mike" Randall's style that he chooses to open his account with the words "In the year of our Press Lord, 1961..." so that we are immediately apprised of three things, at least one of which we'd prefer not to know. Here is a book about Fleet Street (oh, really?), set in the sixties (well, all right), written by a fellow who not only can't write for toffee but tries to ameliorate this perfectly excusable inability by coming on like some arch and pompous schoolboy desperate to be accepted into the fourth form witty clique. (God help us!)

In a chapter entitled "In the Chair", Randall looks back over a half-century of media deterioration to his own glory-days and makes a stab at describing the process of his potency.

"My day began at 7 am," he writes, "when every morning paper landed on my bed and, with the aid of tea and tobacco, I combed them..." But let us not be entirely repulsed by this arbitrary victory of form over content. It does not beguile, true, but in a curious way it informs.

Before something terrible happened and Fleet Street was geographically, spiritually and morally done to death, the daily purchase of a popular newspaper—*Mirror*, *Mail* or *Express*—did not automatically define you as a dangerous idiot. Those were the days when an editor was not a writer, envious or manqué, he was an enabler, an orchestrator of writers, and the better he was at the job the more likely he was to be a man who found his own excitement and romance in the closeness he could bring himself to the source of other people's vitality. And Randall, by all accounts, was a good editor. The lumpen prose, therefore, is a poignant reminder of those dear, dead days when the newspaper industry was predicated on the fact that its energy, and therefore its survival, came from below.

The system was medieval, hierarchic, volatile and cruel, but something was right about it. The pathology of newspapermen was rooted in the understanding that any likely lad bowling in from the provinces with the wit to count up how many letters filled in five inches crossways and the imagination to combine arse-licking and impudence to the precise liaison beloved of baronial tyrants would soon find himself in the editorial chair with a chauffeur-driven limousine at his disposal, a welcome at the Ritz and an expense account he could send three kids to public school on. But for the product, he might have been a yuppie. And the product justified the pathology.

While the big, bad press lords held sway, executive middlemen knew where they stood and journalists were not only needed but employed for their communicative expertise. When the old lordships died and the riff-raff took over the lording, the whole edifice crumbled. Editors were bum-kicked up the street and replaced by new editors who, bereft of a power structure they could relax into, began to confuse their own insecurity with a fear and loathing of what really propped them up—the talent of writers. Journalists became "journos", editors like Randall became mushroom farmers and the poor benighted public got tits and bingo instead of newspapers.

It says something for the spirit of the sixties that Randall's reminiscences come across with all the inappropriate bravado of a ukelele at a funeral. Such luminaries as Keith Waterhouse, Bernard Levin, Ian Jack and Cal McCrystal have generously contributed to the wake which is nothing if not editorially smart. The witty clique is still out there somewhere; all it takes is a Randall to march their band out.

Dynasties

TO HEAR A NIGHTINGALE
Charlotte Bingham
SINGULAR WOMEN
Freda Bright
ZOYA
Danielle Steel
Michael Joseph £11.95 each

Sara Maitland

What doth woman of a book require? The lineaments of gratified desire. But what desire, desire for what? These three books seemed very weird to me—but all of them are from the word processors of successful women's fiction writers and all of them come with the appurtenances of bestsellerdom.

Perhaps I have not kept up to date with the genre. But I have read a number of old-fashioned

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romances—Georgette Heyer, for instance, and worse. The early women's liberation movement rightly launched a vigorous attack on this sort of book, despite recidivist tendencies shown by many feminists in secret. But despite the dangers the ground rules then were simple: with an infinite variety of settings and plot twists, the heroine was either a sweet little thing in love with a higher-caste male whom she finally rescued from the machinations of classier, richer and more glamorous women; or she was a beautiful and spirited aristocrat finally tamed by the love of a strong man. In either case she found happiness in his arms, in those wonderfully orgasmic but chaste embraces. *This* we were taught was what a woman really wanted: LOVE.

Well, not any more, if these three books are typical. Money, ideally earned by her own endeavours in a glamorous and normally male-dominated sphere, and delightful grandchildren are now the rewards of the deserving heroine (I was about to write "virtuous heroine", but that might give you the wrong idea since fidelity, charity, honour, or even simple good manners are not required—raunchy sex is).

To Hear a Nightingale and *Zoya* have almost identical formats: the heroines of both start out poor (admittedly Zoya actually starts out stinking rich as an intimate of the Romanofs but 1917 quickly disposes of that and before long she is nobly poor in Paris). But they are courageous and not downhearted, so they earn their first break, marrying rich, older men—whom they love and have great sex with—and are immediately transported, like Cinderella: Zoya to New York high society and Charlotte Bingham's Cassie to a racing stable.

Both their husbands are charming but, it turns out, financially feckless, and when they die suddenly their women are left to carry on with small children to care for. Now their *real* lives start; and despite dark clouds threatening at every turn they both manage by the end of their respective books to be rich again—Zoya with a shopping empire and Cassie with a Derby winner; and both with the beginnings of healthy dynasties.

Superficially *Singular Women* is a little different, designed perhaps for a more sophisticated audience. Four US college friends discover a statistic which alarms them—only 20 per cent of women over 30 will get married. The three who are unmarried challenge each other to a statistics-breaking race to the altar. In the event only one of them gets married—and she to an "unsuitable" husband—years younger than herself, a non-yuppie immigrant. The other two (plus the one who was already married) end up deciding that career and wealth are more important to them than love and marriage. But though the plot may vary, the ambiance does not: all the women are highly successful in glamorous professions. All are frantically concerned with their clothes and interior decors (described in lavish detail) and with their sexual performance (also described in lavish detail) and all treat men as status objects.

Is this the clue? Have the fantasies of novel readers been affected by feminism to the extent that the worm has turned; men will now be the status symbols and sex objects which they have made women. They will also be defeated where it hurts them most—in the boardroom. It would be enormously comforting to think that was the whole story, but the utter nastiness of everyone concerned makes me wonder. I fear rather that the materialism of the late 1980s has affected even fantasy desires: this is emotional and moral Thatcherism run mad. I ended my 1,270-page marathon read longing for a little bit of someone somewhere sinking into somebody's arms and feeling good about it. True, we'll end up with our arms in his sink, but at least the desire was to do with love, affection, compassion and commitment—human and social values.

African visions

HOPES AND IMPEDIMENTS: SELECTED ESSAYS 1965–87
Chinua Achebe
Heinemann Educational Books £10.95

Adam Lively

Cultural transmission tends to gravitate down lines of political and economic power. The colonised look up to the colonisers' art and ways of thought as being more "universal" than their own, marginalised patterns of life. On the side of the coloniser, only in rare but important instances have artists had the farsightedness to stand against this tide, and see in the art of the colonised more than just so much anthropological booty. (The example Achebe is fond of is the far-reaching impact on 20th century European art of Matisse and Picasso's discovery, around 1904-05, of African sculpture.)

In the metropolis, the politicians will be satisfied with this state of affairs, but artists may see as a consequence of this constant outflow an atrophy of the metropolitan culture. One senses in many quarters these days (Seamus Heaney's latest book would be one recent example) a feeling that the centre of gravity of cultural life in the English-speaking world has shifted to what used to be thought of as the "periphery".

To anyone unaware of these currents, Achebe's book will come as a shock. Here is a critic who considers the most profound and important questions of literature—its truth, its place in and engagement with society—but does so with reference not to Dickens and George Eliot, but to Amos Tutuola and Camara Laye and Christopher Okigbo. Only one European writer, Conrad, is discussed at length, and that is in order to expose the bigotry that underlies *Heart of Darkness*. ("Africa is to Europe as the picture is to Dorian Gray—a carrier on to whom the master unloads his physical and moral deformities.")

Not that Achebe would lay claim to any "universal" significance for the African writers he discusses, because, for good reasons, "universal" is a word for which he has a particular dislike. (In one brilliant essay, "Colonialist criticism", he dissects the way in which, when used

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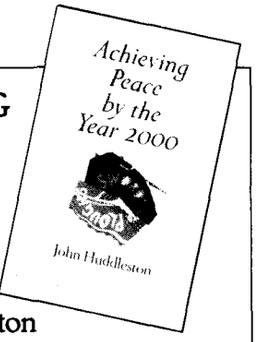

John Huddleston
Chief of Budget & Planning
IMF, Washington

If mankind were to decide to establish peace in the world by the year 2000, what practical steps must be taken now – by individuals, politicians, governments and peace movements – in order to achieve that goal? What options would be open and how could the concerned citizen contribute to this important process?

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KARL MARX'S ANSWER TO THATCHERISM

MARXIST MORALITY

BY WILLIAM ASH £4.95

At a time when Britain is once more being subjected to the dogma that a number of individual wills competing in terms of self-interest will somehow cancel each other out for the general good, and that no other motivation can fuel a modern society but personal aggrandisement whatever the cost to those millions who fall by the wayside, Marx's prescription for a genuinely free society is particularly worth studying.

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by western critics of some work of African literature as a term of patronising approval, it is a codeword meaning really western-and-only-dressed-up-in-African-garb.)

On the contrary, what emerges from his discussions of western individualism (and its concomitant, creativity as personal ownership), of the role of novelist as teacher, and of art as process rather than product, is the distinctiveness of African cultures. One is tempted to talk of "Africanness" here, but Achebe is not the kind of writer to deal in abstractions; most of his examples—including a beautiful autobiographical piece—are drawn from the Igbo culture of eastern Nigeria in which he grew up.

Western writers could learn much from these African visions (though one would be flattering oneself if one thought that that was Achebe's primary intention), not because they radiate universal truths in the way that Europe has seen itself as doing, but precisely because they are so divergent from, so seemingly irrelevant to, our own head-down anxieties. For as Achebe remarks: "Art is man's constant effort to create for himself a different order of reality from that which is given to him." Its truth lies in its diversity, not universality.

A 'facist' society?

THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF FACIAL APPEARANCE
Ray Bull and Nichola Rumsey
Springer-Verlag £42

Jolyon Jenkins

I've always dug my last ditch against feminism at the point where it starts to assert that women are simply *nicer* than men. But I may have been wrong. Consider these two experiments. Men were asked to spend 15 minutes "getting to know" a woman who had previously been rated (by other men) as attractive or unattractive. Afterwards they were asked to give their assessment of the woman's "personality". The attractive women were always given a more positive rating. (Rather strangely, the less a woman had looked at a man the more he was influenced by her appearance.)

In a second study, women and men were paired up for dates. Afterwards, the women were asked how they rated their men for appearance and personality. As with the first experiment, the two assessments were closely correlated—but if a woman had liked a man, she was inclined to think him more attractive than was a woman who had seen his photograph but hadn't actually met him. It seems that while men judge women's personalities on the basis of their attractiveness, women do it the other way round.

This book contains a wealth of intriguing information with which to enliven or bore dinner parties. It confirms, for example, that couples are generally as attractive as each other, and that unmatched partnerships are more likely to founder. Ugly men *can* hold on to attractive wives, but only if they have money or power. Bull and Rumsey don't draw out the Darwinist implications of this: that the rich are gradually bound to become more beautiful, since the offspring of wealthy men are more likely to be attractive than those of poor men—as well as, of course, richer. (Anyone who doubts this process should take a quick stroll round Hampstead village one sunny weekend.)

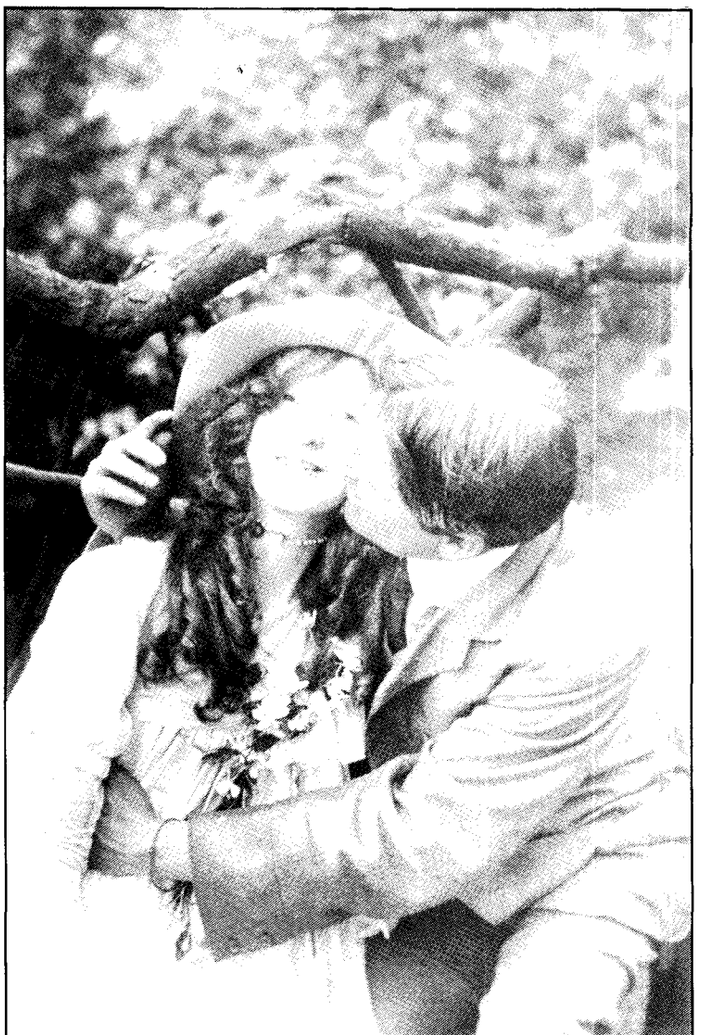
But if the outlook is irritatingly good for ugly rich bastards, it's pleasantly bleak for handsome cads. In one experiment, women were shown dossiers on male students who had supposedly committed disciplinary offences and asked to rate their attractiveness. The worse the offence, the less attractive the women found them.

There has been an awful lot of research done on the social psychology of facial appearance, and Bull and Ramsey seem to have read it all. They are properly keen to pay as much attention to the studies that don't show appearance having social consequences as the ones that do; and with so much knowledge they tend to draw back from saying definitively that appearance has an unequivocal effect on anything. But a fairly casual perusal of the literature suggests that we live in a deeply "facist" society.

For example, we expect ugly people to be more criminal; and, worse, those who have been convicted of offences *do* seem to be uglier. According to one study of juvenile delinquency, "appearance explains 4 per cent of the variation in seriousness of delinquency, 4 per cent of the variation in trouble with parents and 9 per cent of the variation in delinquent behaviour in school."

It's perhaps in politics that the effects are most marked. Subjects shown photographs of election candidates (though they didn't know that's what they were) tended to judge that the ones they thought had right-wing inclinations were more attractive, more honest and of a higher social class. At one stage Ray Bull seems to have thought that attractiveness might actually tip the balance of the 1979 election—the pundits had expected it to be a much closer fight than it turned out to be. In fact, the political swing to the Tories was so high that facial appearance didn't have much effect. The only

continued on page 44



"STOP YER TICKLING, JOCK!"

"A Secret World of Sex 1900-1950" by Steve Humphries (Sidgwick & Jackson, £14.95) is good in parts. These are not the parts written by the author, which are alternately heavy-handed and coy, but where he allows his mainly working-class subjects to talk for themselves. Particularly moving are the tales of pregnant girls thrown by their parents into the workhouse, and from there finding their way into institutions, under the infamous Mental Deficiency Act 1913. But any study of sex can have its pitfalls, as the Blackpool Mass Observation study in 1937 found out: "When we began ...we expected to see copulation everywhere. What we found was petting, feeling, masturbating ...Observer units combed the sands at all hours." Not even shining torches suddenly at couples on the sand, however, is quite so crass as Humphries's captioning of some of the extremely beautiful photographs, particularly one of an unknown couple embracing in the light of a gas lamp high on the wall above them: "Very often sexual intercourse among young working-class couples took place standing up in dark alleys."
(Vicky Hutchings)

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Tie-ins

Paul Munden

The plumbing's a doddle, he assured me:
it's a question of flow and return.
Look, a diagram.

I remember Slick Vic Richards
who brought gimmicks into chapel—
the British Rail logo turned
on its end to illustrate prayer
being a two way traffic.

I'm jolted awake by a questionnaire.
I offer my opinion of the restaurant car
—it's all useful feedback—and return
to my book, a new edition to tie in
with the TV series.

O Lord, I pray for a peaceful journey
and a long hot bath.

Courtesy Call

Lawrence Dale

It takes a hundred and fifty cents in coins
To ring Saskatchewan, the operator says,

Where my uncle's wife is fetched to the phone.
I address her by name, ask how are things, say

That dad was worried about his little brother,
And since I was representing the family

In the States, can I ask how is he, um,
How is everything? Well, she says,

Giving it away in the pause, um, the funeral
Is next Wednesday, and we're doing alright...

Rushing through apologies, I say, I'm studying here,
I only got his letter today. Hanging up,

I look out from the window of the launderette I'm
Phoning from, at the shining frightful film set looking

College buildings. They are too clean, they look
So recently washed down, so newly built.

The sprinklers are scattering water on the green,
And all over the campus grounds, the American

Children are shouting. They are violent, happy,
They are so close to their beginnings still.

I gather up my remaining coins to go. Outside another
Englishman, who got my dollar bills changed for me

Is waiting. I pocket the large thin quarters, tell him
I am fine. We follow the noise to where the evening is,

Where the loud music, and the certain movements
Of the pool balls have their hold on everyone.

I drink a beer without speaking then leave, walk
Into the soaking grass, think of the letters

I must write, and soon reach my flat, go inside and
Start undressing for bed. Helplessly I see images of

My father, feeling death close in and catch him up.
If only we could welcome it like sleep and start again.

My legs are shivering. Almost naked now, almost
Ready to close my eyes and rest. But when my shirt

Comes off, a spark of static catches on the nylon,
Blowing the dark, cold air defiantly alight,

And everything is hard bright blue, even warm,
Until I blink, and all the light is gone.

What to say when you talk to yourself

Stephen Knight

In the corner, doubled up, black PVC,
my travelling bag: my wardrobe: my TV
(black & white): my shelves: my coloured underwear:
my sponge bag: my dirty laundry watching me:
my collection of sprays and my spikes of hair:

my flair for punctuation marks:
my wallet and my BR clerks:
my grilles: my Standard Class return
to Paddington: my black remarks:
my fondness for watching things burn:

my rainy pavements, all night
barnacled with yellow light:
my nostalgia for the beach:
my empty rooms: my long sight
and my skinny, boxer's reach:

my arrivals, my departures: my grey, wax-faced
commuters on the Circle Line: my sense of waste:
my animosities: my lungs: my sliding door
hiccoughing at Swindon: my freshly-soled and -laced
calf-length black boots: my bill for £10.54

and one brittle rose
sandwiched in the prose
of Jonathan Swift:
my hair-line, my nose,
my ears and my gift

for hanging pictures well: my rigid way with words:
my desserts: my tasteless ties: my love of birds
with Paxo: big eyes and lips: my skew-whiff smile
dying on my face: my dark, unbroken turds
slipped into the water like a crocodile.

Popperfoto

Sleeping Position

Vietnamese: Nguyen Ai Quoc,
aka Ho Chi Minh (1880-1969)
Translated by Graeme Watson

The johnnies most lately come to this well-run prison
Sleep nearest the cess-pit. That's one rule we keep.
But money talks; and when it does, men listen
So you'd best pay cash in advance if you need your sleep.

This poem was written in 1942 when Ho Chi Minh spent about a year being shifted from one to another of Chiang Kai-shek's prisons without being identified.

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noticeable effect was that the more intelligent-looking candidate in each constituency was somewhat more likely to be elected. The awful dilemma for Labour is that if they try to cash in on this by choosing intelligent-looking candidates, the voters are likely to assume they are Conservatives. The world, this book confirms, is an unpleasant place, and likely to remain so.

Random jottings

COVENTRY VOICES
Tim Lewis
Red Horse Publications (23 John Tofts House, Leicester Row, Coventry) £12.95

Tony Parker

In this elegantly designed book, which he has published himself, Tim Lewis gives a montage of impressions of the city he's lived in for the last ten years. He had financial assistance to do it from West Midlands Arts and Coventry city council.

Recreated dialogues, imagined interior monologues and 31 of his own photographs range over a spectrum of Coventry's inhabitants and their day-to-day activities. An elderly-minded civic dignitary, youngsters in poolhalls and amusement arcades, glue sniffers, bingo addicts, taxi drivers, mothers out shopping with their babies, unemployed teenagers and adults, Asians, West Indians, a policeman, workers in something called "The Incontinent Laundry Service", cheap picture sellers on a housing estate, women at a battered wives' refuge, playgroup organisers, pensioners in a luncheon club... Lewis portrays a random and rambling list of anyone who took his fancy or caught his eye. His work, he says, "is about the lives and views of ordinary people, how they feel about their city and how they would like to see it change." And, he asserts, "despite unemployment and cuts in social provision, the people of Coventry have retained their humour and resilience."

Well, so have most people everywhere else; and while his book's heart is obviously in the right place (on its sleeve), its body, alas, is in very poor shape. The trouble with his method is that it isn't methodical, giving equal significance to whatever he happens to see merely because he sees it. A pedestrian marooned on a traffic island and unable to go further because of the unending stream of vehicles all round him has ponderously portentous thoughts put into his head: "Society was breaking up, like the surface of the road. Hospital wards were closing, the ambulance service had been moved away, and crime was violently increasing...There was despair out there in the city." (More likely, surely, would be: "Oh shit, how the fuck am I going to get off here?")

And every reader's heart must sink when faced with the ambiguities of "All the stories are based on actual statements made to me" or "This story is based on an actual social worker's report". This doesn't make it more convincing, but less; and it can lead to such absurdities as a piece called "It's a Dog's Life"—anthropomorphism at its wildest, purporting to be the thoughts going through a mongrel's mind as it rummages in waste bins or dozes in the sun. ("'What a cheek!' he thought..." But it isn't made clear whether this is based on actual statements made by the dog, or on an actual report by the dog's actual social worker.)

And it's shallowly macho to conclude the book—presumably as proof of the city's resilience—with a 12-page kick-by-kick account of how Coventry's professional football team twice came back from being a goal down to beat Tottenham Hotspur in the FA Cup Final at Wembley. It must be incomprehensible to all but a small section of Coventry's inhabitants: "Houchen slips the ball out to Bennett on the right. Bennett dummies Thomas and sends in a cross. Houchen dives to reach it. He heads it home and City are level. The fans erupt and Houchen runs elated towards them." This has neither the art nor the seriousness of documentary: it's journalism, and poor journalism—the stuff of pop music, spuriously dazzling but only like one magnesium flash before another. Like anywhere else, Coventry deserves a better epitaph.

The fundamental fault, of course, is in the seductive siren-song of self-publishing, lacking as it always does the insight of a commissioning editor and the skills of a copy editor. Here it allows the author to describe as *Coventry Voices* one voice only, his own, which is reflected in his single style of writing. It would have been better if he'd been more modest in his claim.

Maria at the Parson's Nose

Beloved monster

FIERCE ATTACHMENTS: A MEMOIR
Vivian Gornick
Virago £5.95

Ruth Pavey

Two women are stumping along the streets of Manhattan, talking, laughing, but, above all, fighting. It's a fight that has been going on for more than 40 years, and is evenly matched but for one salient detail; the elder fighter, who is nearly 80, is the younger one's mother. With that advantage she dominates this memoir as surely as she dominated the childhood of the author. Vivian Gornick's other "fierce attachments" are to writing, feminism and men, but they pale beside the attachment to the woman whom the reader only knows as Mama.

Mama has far more intelligence, wit and energy than life as a housewife can absorb or satisfy, and they spill over into bossiness, scorn, fantasy and anger. To herself she is a romantic figure, to the neighbours a queen bee, but to her two children she is suffocation. The husband dies early and the brother retreats into watchfulness, leaving Vivian Gornick alone in the fight for identity. Not quite alone; sexy Nettie is there across the landing, offering an alternative to Mama's model of womanhood.

The overwhelming Jewish mother, beloved monster, is not a fresh subject, and even an English reader knows about life in the teeming New York tenements, but this account is very fresh. It has great style, with enough Yiddish and "already"s to let you hear the voices, plenty of sex and sensuality, and a painterly feeling for light. The Manhattan streets star almost as prominently as Mama, because mother and daughter are tireless walkers. On these present-day walks we learn about the past.

I do feel some unease: the constant humour is a delight, but is it getting to the heart of things, or sometimes avoiding it? And about immediacy: in the thick of real life one is generally unaware of three quarters of what is happening, but Gornick occasionally slips subsequent understanding into present action. This novelistic approach may help our overall comprehension, but it distances us as well.

Fierce Attachments is a gutsy book. It is also sad. The fight is still on, and makes neither of the protagonists happy. There are fleeting moments of connection but months and years of hurt and disappointment. Fictional conflict has the comfort of resolution. This fight, however, is real. It stems from the vital need for individual identity and recognition (how much did Mama have as a child?). Gornick has not shrunk from life, far from it, but throughout the account of her attachment to her mother, and to men, runs the plaintive sense of not having been truly seen.

The underlying message is that dominated children have great difficulty developing enough sense of self to sustain them in full adult relationships. This may not be news, but it's worth repeating. That the repetition should be so readable is a great bonus.

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Tony Allan: "anarcho-surrealist" comic who "started" Green Wedge with a joke

Live Earth Day

Tune in, don't drop out

Will Hatchett meets some eco-warriors who believe that something awful has just happened in the near future

This Saturday, the global jukebox turns green. A hoped-for one billion people in 11 countries worldwide will tune in to *Live Earth Day*. What they'll get is ten hours of rock music, interlaced with scary videos on the rape of the tropical rain forests, the greenhouse effect, the toxification of sea and sky.

The UK contribution, dubbed the "David Bellamy Festival of the Future" (sic) will be a rock extravaganza in Fife, featuring three stages, an ecological fayre and a solar, laser-powered light show. We won't be able to watch Live Earth here in real-time, though. British TV will simply be recording chunks for later transmission. And many will be grateful, arguing that the only inevitable effects of ten hours of television are alpha waves and chronic flatulence.

We live in an age in which T-shirts speak louder than words; social nostrums are sought from pop stars; and politics must be endlessly trivialised for couch potatoes. But Live Earth does perhaps have a deeper significance, as the first occasion purely ecological issues have moved from the margins to centre stage. And it has this going for it too: you can't as an individual influence the geo-politics of famine, but you can stop using aerosols which deplete the ozone layer.

All this has meant that Green Wedge—the organisation which handled the London promotion of Live Earth—has been thrust from a community centre in Ladbroke Grove into the middle of the global village. The group, which describes itself as "an entertainment and propaganda wing of the eco-warriors", is founded on the premise that "something awful has just happened in the near future". It pushes no political programme, only a state of mind. An eco-warrior could just as easily be an anarchist from Brixton, a new age hippy, or a city banker eschewing coloured for white toilet paper in his own bid to save the planet.

It all started with a joke, made by alternative comedian Tony Allen at the Tabernacle Club in September 1987—"Never mind about Red Wedge, what we need is Green Wedge." And the word became flesh. Then along came Joe Strummer, formerly of the Clash, but now headlining a band called Latino Rockabilly War. Strummer's name and support guaranteed big audiences for this summer's Green Wedge benefits.

It's still unclear whether it's OK for an eco-warrior to wear a leather jacket and throw beer cans—but the Green Wedge gigs, notably at the Hackney Empire in early July, have been remarkably good tempered. Tony Allen as MC (an anarcho-surrealist) seems to speak to both extremes—those who pogo, and those who swirl to the ethereal music of the spheres.

The purpose of Green Wedge is rapprochement, not definition of difference. (Note here that Red Wedge, which was launched in 1985, quickly appeared to become an involuted clique, whose credentials were a Fred Perry sports shirt and a new kind of haircut.) Lee Ferguson, Green Wedge's production manager, says: "The green image of corduorys and old hippies is dying. Now people are catalysed by single issues—anti-vivisection, acid rain, save the whales—not against each other... We're nothing to do with the Green Party, as such; and we're not CND, which took 15 years to make the connection between the Bomb and the civil nuclear power industry."

If that sounds a little measured, check out Tim Williams, Green Wedge's public speaker and resident visionary (you can hear his blend of

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mysticism and absolute sincerity at Hyde Park Corner most Sunday afternoons). Williams claims that his involvement began on the astral plane, in America, rather than on this tired old earth: "I was told to seek a challenge, and that a legion of light-bearing souls would support me in this task. Then I met Tony."

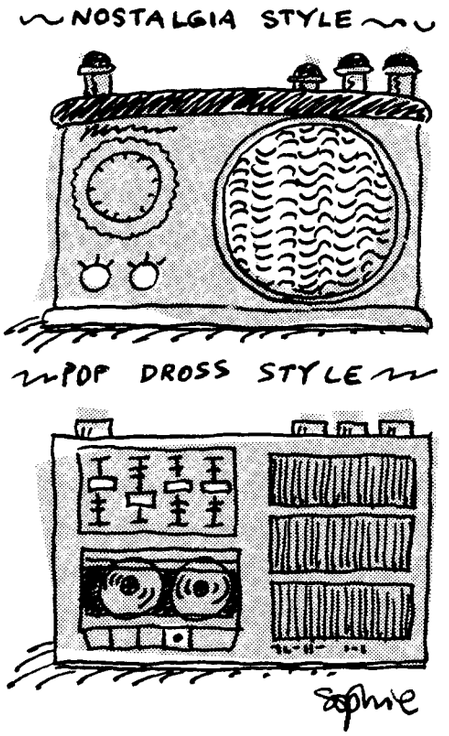
He explicates for me the punchy Green Wedge logo, "It's the tip of the pyramid, and we're trying to activate the all-seeing eye, just like on the American dollar bill. Only we're not going for the dollar; we're going for the planet." Which sounds like an eminently sensible idea, with or without the joss sticks.

Local radio

Majority listening

Britain's most popular radio is mostly ignored, says Andy Medhurst. Why?

Writing about radio is not a highly developed art. The few existing regular columns seem umbilically welded to Radios 3 and 4, usually spend most of their length relating the plots of obscure plays and witless documentaries on those networks and occasionally confess to a coy fondness for *The Archers*. The socially worthy school of radio criticism concentrates its efforts on campaigning for small community stations, with the same discreet zeal that elsewhere fights to save cottage hospitals. A third tendency, aflame with tower-block romanticism, celebrates pirate radio—so contemporary, so finger-on-the-pulse, so *street*.



Sophie Grillet

All of which means that the radio stations listened to by the vast majority of people scarcely get written about at all. Well, Radio 1 or 2 might receive the standard, predictable broadside from any of the aforementioned groups, but local stations, both BBC and commercial, remain the great undiscussed.

Norwich is home to two of the most successful local stations in Britain. Between them, BBC Radio Norfolk and independent Radio Broadland are listened to by two-thirds of the available population, leaving the four national networks to mop up the rest. Both stations are almost paradigmatic examples of the strengths and weaknesses of local radio, and both demonstrate very clearly the different traditions and pressures at work in the BBC and commercial sectors.

One reason for the two stations' success is that they don't compete with each other. Radio Norfolk is talk-based, gently paced, and draws in middle-aged and older audiences; Radio Broadland deals in almost unbroken pop music and has cornered the younger end of the market.

Broadland's music policy is tame, bordering on the complacent, and fights conspicuously shy of any music with a little edge or bite. It rarely risks playing records by new artists until they are firmly lodged in the national charts, and its choice of oldies shows its pop memory to be curiously selective. You're far more likely to hear Adam Faith or Neil Diamond revived than The Jam or The Specials. Black music, unless sanctified through extreme age or excused through innocuousness, is rarely heard. Occasionally it is explicitly frowned on: in a special programme where one of the presenters played the favourite records of his colleagues, he introduced one batch with "I thought Chrissie would have gone for some awful hip-hop but instead she's picked some really nice music".

The most concrete commitment to the community that Broadland has is its Actionline department, whose functions range from listing lost pets (the "Furry Friends File", no less) to researching and publishing information packs about issues such as cancer care and drug addiction. Admirable as this work is, it's in the process of being scaled down. The Actionline staff are employed via an MSC scheme, and government changes to such schemes mean that from this autumn Broadland would have to start footing the bill, something it seems reluctant to do.

Radio Norfolk, conversely, is a station dominated by local community matters. To listen to it is to discover a strange, neglected kind of broadcasting where pre-war BBC paternalism meets the bustle of a Women's Institute tombola stall, the whole thing presided over by a metaphorical holy trinity of Lord Reith, Joyce Grenfell and the Singing Postman.

It's easy to imagine Radio Norfolk being run entirely by its listeners, in fact it virtually is already. If an announcer makes a mistake, Radio Norfolk devotees don't waste time writing in, they ring up and are frequently put on the air to point out the error. Many of its programmes emerge as unclassifiable hybrids of parish magazine, agony column, bush telegraph and oral history. The lunchtime programme nominates a "village of the week", inviting current and former residents to write or phone in with reminiscences. Much of the material is anecdotal and nostalgic, but it's none the less fascinating for that.

Nostalgia is perhaps the key term, since Radio Norfolk doesn't quite seem to be at home with the 1980s. Its single most memorable programme is Sunday lunchtime's *Dad's Favourite Tunes*, where music from the 1920s to the 1950s is accompanied by listeners' letters, irresistible narratives of wartime romances, dance hall seductions and eventual bereavements. The tag of being the station for the elderly is one station manager Keith Salmon has learned to live with: "We didn't set out to aim specifically for that kind of audience, it's just that they are the people most attracted by what we do, which is speech radio with a commitment to the community. Our audience wants to hear about where they are, while younger listeners who want more music can get that from Broadland." Nevertheless, Radio Norfolk has deliberately entrenched itself with its ageing audience. When BBC economies demanded a ten per cent cut in local radio costs, Norfolk simply dropped its entire evening schedule, the one part of its programming aimed at the young.

It's hard to shake off the feeling that Radio Norfolk's approach, sentimentality and all, is a more local kind of local radio than Broadland's recycling of the new Bros single, but to say that runs the risk of consigning the whole population of the county to premature retirement. The elderly of Norfolk may want to hear about where they are, but many of the county's young people wish they were somewhere else—and how better to shake off the constrictions of rural East Anglia than by plugging into the global culture of pop. "Radio Norfolk?", a class of A-level students in Norwich once told me, "That's for farmers", and the derogatory drawl of the last word said it all.

Nevertheless, Broadland, with its local inflections, remains more popular than the national pop station, Radio 1. Without getting unduly mystical, this has something to do with the Norfolkness of Norfolk. Despite rapid social change, it's still an isolated county (you don't go through it to get to anywhere else) and one with a strong and unusually deep sense of local identity. The population is, given the size of the county, still small and strikingly homogeneous: it's hardly coincidental that the only BBC local station more successful than Norfolk is Radio Cornwall, which serves a similar, somehow edge-of-England community (and doesn't, as yet, have a commercial rival). Norfolk has no sizeable ethnic minorities, so there would be no real space for small-scale community stations geared to suiting minority culture needs, but in an odd sort of way that is what Norfolk and Broadland already do. They're minority stations in an area where the minority happens to be the majority. And whether local listeners incline towards the BBC's nostalgic tales of village life or Broadland's hand-me-down Tony Blackburns, both styles share a rootedness in the community that goes beyond their surface differences.

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Music

The cult of respect

Stuart Cosgrove on the politics of muslim rap

A few days before he was shot dead at a rally in New York's Washington Heights, the radical black nationalist leader Malcolm X was refused entry into Britain. Over 20 years later he is admitted by the boxload. Every consignment of imported records that arrives at Heathrow airport, en route to Britain's irrepressible club scene, is franked with the memory of Malcolm X.

The most in-demand record of the month is *It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold Us Back* (Def Jam/CBS), the second album by New York's muslim rap band Public Enemy, whose militant brand of political rhetoric and dislocating noise has been greeted as the new power-punk of America's black underclass.

Public Enemy are currently pop music's most controversial ambassadors. Over the last 12 months they have been hysterically accused of being black nazis who spread racially divisive messages to rap audiences in America and Britain. Their last London concert, a tense affair at Camden's Electric Ballroom, was surrounded by press hype, police warnings and tales of foreboding. The night of riot never materialised but Public Enemy, masters of apocalyptic fiction, played a major role in the troubled atmosphere.

It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold Us Back is a series of chaotic threats which hinge on the skills of scratch DJ, Terminator X (no relation) and the group's most articulate spokesperson, the radical socialist Chuck D. Using fragments of old Malcolm X speeches to introduce songs like "Bring The Noise", Public Enemy have declared their position. Not for them the conciliatory optimism of Martin Luther King, whose public addresses are a common feature in underground club homages like The Speech's "I Have A Dream" (London). Public Enemy prefer danger and disruption, with tracks like "Black Steel In The Hour Of Chaos", "Terminator X To The Edge Of Panic" and the definitive late eighties dance command "Rebel Without A Pause" creating a mood of crisis and confrontation.

At the core of Public Enemy's fixation with the memory of Malcolm X lies the dialectic of historical determinism. A group of young blacks, born into the relative comfort of suburban Long Island, have seized on the famous black nationalist slogan—"The Hate That Hate Produced"—and woven a musical masterpiece around fear, loathing and a public promise that slavery will be revenged.

Ironically, Public Enemy's stance is complicated by a historical derailment. The group's most persistent talker, Professor Griff, leader of their para-military stage show The Security Of The First World, is a member of Louis Farrakhan's Fruit Of Islam, the separatist party which has taken up the creased mantle of Islamic black nationalism since the defection, then death of Malcolm X. Griff rarely beats about the bush, "White people are lying murdering cheats. It's in their nature", he told me. "They are the devil, they are incapable of behaving in any other way."

Public Enemy

A group of young blacks have seized on the famous black nationalist slogan: The Hate That Hate Produced

Meanwhile, in another part of the hip-hop hemisphere, a 21-year-old South Bronx homeboy called Kris Parker, who is better known to the rap fraternity as Blastmaster KRS 1, has found another way of dealing with the memory of Malcolm X.

His current album, *By All Means Necessary* (Jive) descants on a famous slogan used by Malcolm X in an infamous campaign poster in the early sixties. The poster shows Malcolm looking out of an apartment window holding a gun and anticipating the arrival of the armed renegades of the Black Panther movement. The LP sleeve has KRS 1 looking out of a window holding a Mac 10 pistol, the stylised fashion gun glorified in past episodes of *Miami Vice* and beloved by young rap stars.

Inside the sleeve's fetishised image of gun-history, *By All Means Necessary* is a clever rejection of the self-destructive violence that has recently visited the New York rap scene. "Stop The Violence" is a plea for tolerance and an end to the escalating turf-wars that have left hundreds of young blacks dead or critically injured in the public housing projects of Reagan's other America, "Illegal Business" is an angry critique of the business interests controlling the international trade in crack, and "My Philosophy" is a lesson on black history which calls for a rejection of racial stereotypes and the installation of that increasingly familiar rap catch-phrase *respect*.

Kris Parker, who left home at 13 and spent the next seven years living in a centre for the homeless in South Bronx, preparing himself for a career as a graphics student at the New York School of Visual Arts, is disarmingly bright for someone who rejected formal education. "Malcolm X should be shown respect, not for what he advocated but for what he endured. He wanted a form of apartheid that I don't accept and has no possibilities today, but he was part of our history and deserves respect."

The notion of "respect" has been borrowed from the curriculum of black history and education by the new school of rap artists and turned into a byword for anything or anybody who has achieved. The cult of "respect" has found its most obvious manifestation in The Juice Crew All Stars' "Evolution" (Cold Chillin), a rap single which re-enacts the major achievements in black history with black teenagers playing the parts of the slave saviour Harriet Tubbman and Martin Luther King, ending on a rhyming tribute to Maya Angelou's "Why The Caged Bird Sings".

But the motion of black American history refracted through rap music, inevitably ends at a terminus of self-identification. There are those like Bronx reggae-rapper Don Barron, who calls himself MCA, The Mike Chanter Of America, and believes his black Jamaican heritage has been fully assimilated into the melting pot; and those like Public Enemy who simply don't belong in the USA.

It Takes A Nation Of Millions To Hold Us Back was released on Independence Day, more in a gesture of rage than a declaration of national patriotism. Even the words recall the memory of Malcolm X. "Picture us coming out on the 4th of July/And if you heard we're celebrating, that's a worldwide lie".

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Cinema

Monster march

Suzanne Moore on two unusual movies which blend America's past and present

Grown-up's monsters are so sophisticated these days that it is not surprising that the old bogeymen—Dracula, Frankenstein and the Werewolf—should increasingly be relegated to children's films. **The Monster Squad** takes these familiar stories and updates them in a way that makes them thoroughly modern; so modern in fact that what is essentially a kids' movie has been lumbered with a 15 certificate—meaning that however much make-up 12-year olds smack on their faces they will be unable to see it. Comic scenes like the one where a virgin is required to read an incantation—and such a person can't be found even among the local 15-year olds—are probably among the reasons why the censors decided against a PG certificate. Yet even these scenes are mild in comparison with average TV fodder.

But if parents have to be dragged along to *The Monster Squad* then at least there are enough movie in-jokes to play spot-the-spoof. A gang of kids obsessed with monsters soon find themselves up against the real thing as Count Dracula arrives in America in order to search for an ancient amulet. On the way he picks up his friends—Wolfman, Frankenstein, Gill-Man and the Mummy. Dismisssed by incredulous teachers and parents, the children of course know it is up to them to fight the ultimate battle between good and evil, and enlist the help of the Scary German Guy down the road (probably a dude on welfare).

There are plenty of winning touches in this genre-bending film which mixes comedy with horror. Frankenstein defects from Dracula's leadership as he falls for the little girl—just like the original 1930s version. The Mummy ("Band-Aid Breath") gets unravelled while Dracula is done in by nothing less than a garlic pizza. Hell is portrayed fittingly as a kind of black hole that sucks everything into itself. The revamping of the vampire legend also produces some strange juxtapositions—the final showdown with the Count takes place in a sporting goods store, while the distinctly un-virginal Brides of Dracula bite the dust outside the local Burger King.

What is most striking about *Monster Squad*, though, is the way it assumes a high degree of media literacy, even among children. Full of references to other films, books and TV programmes, many of its laughs depend on an intimacy with the incestuously interlocking nature of contemporary media. Thus one of the kids wears a "Stephen King Rules" T-shirt; the gang call themselves a "squad" after *Miami Vice*; Sean watches drive-in movie monsters in between chasing real ones (which are themselves reincarnations of the last 50 years' worth of horror films); the theme to *The Monster Squad* is a rap song and so on. Which makes it even more ridiculous that while Hollywood producers presume such a level of sophistication among its young audiences, British censors don't allow them to see it.

Sherman's March, subtitled *A Meditation on the Possibilities of Romantic Love in the South during an Era of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation*, a film produced, recorded and edited by Ross McElwee is all the things you might suspect from such a title. It is rambling, self-indulgent and over-long. It is also one of the funniest and most human films that I've seen for a long time.

Ostensibly a documentary on General Sherman, who at the end of the American Civil War wrought destruction on the South (a region he had held in great affection prior to the war), *Sherman's March* rapidly turns into something quite different—a record of the film-maker's own "march" through the South after being ditched by his girlfriend. Returning to his family home in North Carolina, McElwee decides to follow his sister's advice and use his camera as a way of meeting women. It certainly works as he meets one extraordinary woman after another. There's aspiring actress Pat, for instance, who invites him to film her going through her incredibly lewd "anti-cellulite exercises". Describing herself as a "female prophet" Pat's greatest ambition is to have a part in a Burt Reynolds movie. McElwee also falls for Wini, a linguist living an isolated and self-sufficient existence on a semi-tropical island who can discuss complex metaphysical problems while milking a cow. Then there are his old flames Jackie, a fervent anti-nuke campaigner, and the rather distant Karen—an attorney and ERA activist.

Perhaps most extraordinary of all is the indomitable Charleen, who tries desperately to encourage McElwee to put down the goddam camera and express a bit of passion. "This is life Ross, not art!" For McElwee seldom does anything without his camera: it gets involved in embraces, in tussles, and holds vigil over his insomnia-inspired soliloquies. McElwee worries about the nuclear apocalypse, ponders chance remarks made by whichever woman he is currently infatuated with, and explains his morbid fascination with the contradictory Sherman.

As one is eased into the slow rhythms of the film a different and rarely-glimpsed side of America is revealed. Sure, there are the pyschopathic survivalists who rant about the joys of rural life while blowing most of it apart at every available opportunity. And there's the fundamentalist preacher who describes the Antichrist, while a large, fluffy Easter bunny looms in the background. But throughout the film we see a string of protest movements that belong to an undying and fundamentally American radical tradition.

As McElwee drifts along led by his camera (if not his prick) he begins to wonder if he is "filming my life in order to have a life". Indeed his endless voyeuristic fascination doesn't produce a real relationship with any of these women. Most of them are, understandably, more interested in other things. Even more startling than his self-conscious voyeurism, however, is their active participation in it and the willingness of the most strong-minded characters to turn themselves into objects for his visual probing.

But then who could fail to be charmed by a man whose car continually breaks down, who says daft things like "I fell into a deep psycho-sexual despair", and who really *doesn't* know the difference between art and life?

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Theatre

Beating the drum

Betty Caplan on making a song and dance about apartheid

In the late forties and early fifties apartheid was still in its infancy. "Sophiatown, a place where dreams were made" is how writer Can Themba described the freehold suburb of Johannesburg at the time. "The laws were there, but if you wanted to ignore them you could. And we did," the novelist Nadine Gordimer has said recalling the same bohemian milieu. The Junction Avenue Theatre Company's *a capella* musical **Sophiatown** (Hampstead Theatre Club) celebrates the heady period in the city's history when gangsters rubbed shoulders with intellectuals, colour was immaterial and ideas were cheaper than bread. Once the Nationalist government came to power in 1948, however, the free and easy mixing of races was seen as a blot on the landscape, and the removal of all the families began in 1955 to make way for the new white suburb of Triomf.

Sophiatown charts the story of the group centred on *Drum* magazine, a focus of intellectual and political activity. Jakes (Patrick Shai), a free-thinking exponent of the "new journalism", sets the cat among the pigeons by advertising for a Jewish girl to come and live with his extended family in the house which serves as office, shebeen, schoolhouse and meeting place. Ruth (Megan Krushkal) proves to be more than they bargained for. Experiments may be all very well, but the outside world has a habit of creeping into your living-room. By trying so hard to be one of the boys, and to deny her background, she alienates both Jakes and the dapper "American" gangster Mingus, as well as the women of the household. "White skin equals fatal attraction" Jakes is fond of saying, and Ruth confronts him with the limitations of his own stereotypes, but the tensions her presence creates are never fully explored, and although the group is clearly intended as a microcosm of the outside world, it remains too sealed off to give an accurate picture of the jostling, explosive community beyond its hearth.

Nevertheless there is a great deal of joy and laughter in the exchange of information and tradition between Ruth and her adoptive black family. She buys in drinks for the stoical matriarch Mamariti's "Diamond Shebeen" and her invocation of the Jewish blessing over the ghastly sweet Friday-night wine on which they get sloshed provides much mirth, touching on the deep and complex web of relations, linking Jews and blacks. If this could work, anything might be possible.

The musical numbers which intercut the dialogue are highly effective and tastefully integrated. The company, who are from Johannesburg and who researched the play over several years are equally adept at song and speech—a combination rare in grander institutions than this. Music was a vital ingredient in the "towners" lives, and here it carries much of the emotional content, expressing their defiance and their attachment to a unique way of life. And if the family vignettes are somewhat inconclusive, the gallery of characters is impressively rich and varied—from the fast-talking Mingus who sports gaberdine raincoat and half-eaten apple, Richard Widmark style, to the dignified Mamariti, and the ebullient numerologist Mr Fahfee. Which makes the final scene all the more like a funeral procession, as they file into the room piled up with baggage, their family unit destroyed by dissension and their campaign of defiance pre-empted by an over-zealous police force. It is a fitting reminder that the struggle goes on.

Meanwhile, in Paddington township, not a million miles away from Sophiatown, a white South African director with a taste in grotesque poetry leads a mixed race cast through rehearsals of Brecht's *Caucasian Chalk Circle*. John Matshikiza's **In the Paddington Style** (Soho Poly) draws parallels between Brecht's play and the local situation of a white colonial "utopia" turning into black independent state. An African proverb has it that "when the elephants fight, it is the grass that suffers". I'm afraid that on this occasion it wasn't only the grass. Whatever Matszikiza is trying to do here is buried under a rubble of verbiage. But it would take more than the combined efforts of the Berliner Ensemble and the Moscow Arts Theatre to make sense of this pointless exercise. David Mallinson and Holly Wilson make valiant efforts to survive, but the other performances are wrongly pitched for the space, and wouldn't go amiss in the Royal Albert Hall. The play ends with the new republic celebrating its independence, the Queen Mother regrettably unable to be present. She was lucky.

"White skin equals fatal attraction": Patrick Shai and Megan Krushkal in "Sophiatown"

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MEDIATIONS

I tried very hard to enjoy Michael Gambon's performance in the title role of Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya* at the Vaudeville Theatre the other night. I bent over backwards, in fact, looking for the subtle nuances, the daring leaps that would announce the man's enduring skills.

It was no good. Whatever allowance I make, it has to be admitted that Gambon is the latest in a line of actors who have been ruined for me by the ubiquity of their voices during television's commercial breaks. A positive stampede of classical actors has trampled the voice-over market. Among the unmistakeable cadences that immediately preceded Gambon's fast climb up the sales-pitch ladder are Alan Howard, Anthony Hopkins, Derek Jacobi, Ian Holm and Simon Callow. All are voices trained and honed for the truly demanding work of enunciating Shakespeare and the classical repertoire. All make much more lucre telling us to buy soap flakes.

There's a class of actor a step down from these who must be a bit less discriminating in what they will sell (or who come a bit cheaper) for their voice-overs are more frequently heard than the classicals. I'm thinking of Anton Rogers, Michael Jayston, John Shrapnel, Peter Barkworth and Geoffrey Palmer, jobbing actors who work right across the range and seem to voice at least one new ad per week. There's also Chris Tarrant, an entertainer-cum-personality who lends his tones to anything; and the special case of Miriam Margolyes, both the only woman established in the field and possessor of an extraordinary repertoire of different voices whereas (Gambon's embarrassing Irish accent for Aer Lingus included) the men make no effort at disguise or anonymity.

Why should I let it get to me? After all, the very fact of an actor's voice and face becoming familiar denies any chance of an objective response to a performance. So Gambon's Vanya is set willy-nilly in one's mind in the context of his Galileo and his Lear, his Eddie Carbone in *A View from the Bridge* and his Marlow in *The Singing Detective*. Art does not happen in a void.

But advert familiarity is more than a void. Gambon has made a career decision that he will lend his distinctive instrument, as actors call their voices, to the selling of products. In one of his earliest endorsements, a lamentable ad for the *Times*, he even allowed reference to his performance in *The Singing Detective*, as though his serious work was the servant of the real business of capitalism. Actors, the most naturally promiscuous people in the world, simply can't have it every which way. If they crave to have their work taken seriously, it's no good going about it by being on hire to the highest bidder.

W Stephen Gilbert

Television

Real lives

Mark Finch on TV's curious foray into family therapy

Mike Smith starts LWT's new series **Family Affairs** (Fridays 6.30-7.00pm) with an accusation: "In Britain we rarely seem to discuss our emotional problems until it's virtually too late." Really? Obviously Mike hasn't been to the pub, listened to pop music, read a magazine, or, indeed, ever watched TV. Personal problems are discussed constantly in our culture; the idea of being in tune with our "emotions" positively tyrannises us. We spend hours agonising and talking about how difficult it is to talk about our personal agonies.

Of course, we know what Mike really means: this is a programme "all about *real* people and the personal conflicts they're caught up in", watched by an audience of characters "who've been through emotional heartache themselves" (no, he means the studio audience, not us). In the first programme, the real people are Tony and Sharon—in love and about to wed—and Tony's sister, Maria, who thinks they should call the whole thing off. Mike and counsellor Phillip Hodson host the studio-based discussion after a film fills us in with the details: love at first sight in a Dorking bakery, Maria and Tony's isolated childhood, etc. Unlike *Blind Date* (another LWT production) there are separate seats here; no comfy sofa or Cilla to smooth over the mortifying bits.

It's a good showdown: "natural" sympathy is with bride-to-be Sharon, a spunky woman who shoots from the hip (when Maria says her friends also think the marriage is doomed, Sharon hits back "You're lucky to have any, lass"). Maria's main complaint seems to be that Sharon has no taste. "Their spare bedroom is in seal grey and bright yellow and they've got pink curtains...It makes you ill to look at it." Mike Smith rightly asks whether all this fuss might be to do with the fact that Sharon is working class and used to live on a caravan site.

Family Affairs loosely resembles a US series that another LWT show, *Clive James on TV*, made fun of—*People in Crisis*. A wacky, handsome and enthusiastic referee-therapist whips the audience into a gameshow frenzy over whether Brad should let Charlene sleep with other men. Granted, America has done more to popularise (and vulgarise) psychoanalysis than anywhere else, but the problem with grey-socked Smith and highbrow Hodson is they're just not charismatic enough. There's no transference.

They have difficulties with their roles as well. At first Mike has his guests treat him as a talk-show host, while Phillip chimes in with statistics like interference from another channel. Finally they team up together and bully the reluctant bridesmaid. Frankly, a much better discussion could be had without them, with Sharon and Tony and Maria talking directly to the audience—*real* people, like in *real* life.

A second, smaller problem is with the degree of information we're allowed. Sharon and Maria make intriguing asides about kicking a boyfriend's dog and splitting up another brother's relationship; a real counsellor would follow these digressions, but on TV there just isn't time. This is one show that would actually benefit from that annoying *Network 7* device of ceaseless tickertape subtitles.

What are the DJ and the agony uncle trying to do—solve the specific problem or offer a metaphor for the viewer's own situation? Simply because a half hour can offer no more than a snapshot of someone else's suffering—like being behind an arguing couple on a bus—it goes some way to confirming that *real* life is as messy as you always suspected.

The programme-makers have been deluged with volunteer contestants. Do would-be candidates, like premature ejaculators, accidentally solve the problem, embarrassingly, in their living room with the researcher? Don't most people feel crushed by problems—would *real* victims make good TV? Editor Tony Moss explains that many of the dilemmas they reject are of marital conflict involving such a degree of domestic violence that any counsellor would advise separation. But if that is the best solution to the problem, why shouldn't Mike and Phillip be rooting for it? If LWT really believe in *Family Affairs*' therapeutic power, then imagine how many abused women and men would be freed by that simple testimonial.

But to go on TV and admit, "yes, your marriage is intolerably painful and probably dangerous—leave" wouldn't fit the programme's premise that families and couples come first. *Family Affairs* seems to be about repairing families at all costs; there are no MOT failures here. Does anyone really doubt that Sharon and Tony won't get to the church on time?

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VOLUNTEER NOTICE BOARD is a free service provided by New Statesman & Society with financial assistance from Thames Television's Help programme. Interested organisations are invited to send their copy (approximately 45 words) to Brian Cushion at New Statesman & Society, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London, E2 8DQ. Please note that this service is for recruiting volunteers only. If you have salaried vacancies contact the Classified Department on 01-739-1645.

APPEALS ASSISTANT wanted. Action for Victims of Medical Accidents is a small national Charity. We need a Volunteer to act as Appeals Assistant to help with all our fundraising activities. The position would suit a Graduate seeking a way into the field of charity fundraising. Hours are flexible, travelling expenses plus honorarium paid. Further details contact Sarah Woodward Phone: 01-403-4744.

DRIVERS REQUIRED - FPSU Voluntary Services Bureau, West Birmingham needs volunteers for drivers register who we can call on, perhaps 4 or 5 times a year, to take patients on outings. Interested? Please write to us C/O Dudley Road Hospital, Western Road, Birmingham, B18 1QH, or phone 021 554 3801 ext 4880.

CITIZEN ACTION is in urgent need of volunteers for a variety of office support work with the Campaign for Lead-Free Air, in its Central London office. Daytime and evening help needed, on occasional or regular basis; we pay expenses. Phone Sarah Finch for details on 278 9686.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! The Association For All Speech Impaired Children (AFASIC) urgently needs regular help with simple clerical work such as stuffing envelopes. We also need someone who can enter basic information on a word-processor. Expenses within London paid, sandwich lunch provided, friendly atmosphere. Contact Helen: 01-236 3632/6487, AFASIC, 347 Central Markets, Smithfield, London, EC1 9NH.

RATHBONE/SPRINGBOARD Catering Scheme, Coalville, Leicestershire, requires Volunteers who are experienced caterers for 20-25 hours per week. Currently providing service to 30-40 customers and training 6 trainees with learning difficulties. The business will shortly expand. The possibility of permanent funding. Please ring (0530) 39531.

WIMBLEDON C.A.B. requires trainee advisers to give 2+ days weekly to this busy Bureau near B.R./L.T. Station. Basic literacy & numeracy skills are necessary. Previous experience with disadvantaged/oppressed groups is an asset. Training and expenses will be provided. For further details ring Di or Gill on 947-9344.

FAMILY COURTS SERVICE is urgently looking for volunteers to staff the Saturday Access Centre which is based at Balham and provides a safe and enjoyable place for parents and children, who live apart, to meet or spend time together. If you are interested please ring: 01-672-2682.

VOLUNTEER Debt Counsellors needed for busy Citizens Advice Bureaux in West Hendon and Burnt Oak. Full training given in generic advice work and debt work. Minimum two days' per week required, but this may be worked in half days. It is very challenging and rewarding work. Applications from both Asian and Black people and retired people (up to age 65) welcomed. Phone Miranda 202 0195.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED If you are fit, can drive, with a sense of humour, have 2 to 6 months to spare and would like the experience of caring for a disabled person full-time in his own flat, then I have a place for you. Ideal for person interested in Social Work. Volunteers receive £35 per week and free accommodation. More details contact Alan Soffert on 01 736 8555.

help

The HELP programme is a 5 minute local programme appearing at 6.25 on Thames TV, three times a week. Currently no transmision. Back in September!

It's summer and there's lots on in London

But where can you afford to go if you are unemployed? 'Shoestring Summer' is a free new booklet which lists free events and concessions available for unemployed people in the Thames area this summer. It's free, it's provided by the HELP programme and you can get it from:

HELP (Shoestring Summer),
P.O. Box 11, London, NW1 3HZ

HELP • THAMES TV • EMBER HOUSE • 164/166 DRUMMOND STREET LONDON • NW1 3HR • TELEPHONE: 01 387 9494

CAMBRIDGE ALTERNATIVES needs volunteers urgently to help with its summer programme providing activities and support for disadvantaged children during the summer holidays. Fun provided, expenses paid. If you can help and live near Cambridge please contact Melissa Horn or Danny Williams at Cambridge Alternatives, 74 Burleigh Street, Cambs. CB1 1DJ or ring (0223) 311211.

FULL TIME VOLUNTEERS are urgently needed for a Night Shelter/Resettlement Project in Stoke-On-Trent. You must be committed to the needs of single homeless people. Separate accommadation/meals on duty plus pocket money/allowance. £34 per week. Details from Gill Brown, Potteries Housing Association, 43 Sampson Street, Hanley, Stoke-On-Trent, ST1 5EY. Tel: 0782 279234.

EDINBURGH CYRENIANS require residential volunteers for our farm community and city community, which provide long-term care and support for young and homeless people who are experiencing personal and social difficulties. Our methods of social work, psychiatric and penal institutions. Volunteers will receive free board and lodgings, pocket-money, holiday money and termination grant. Minimum 6 months required. Contact Rosemarie at 20 Broughton Place, Edinburgh or 031-556-4971.

PARENTS ANONYMOUS is a voluntary telephone service for troubled people to get support in their time of need. If you are a parent and could spare some time weekly and feel you could listen, support, sympathise then please write for details of our next training to: 9 Manor Gardens, London, N7 6LA.

KINGSTON/RICHMOND Area. Are you a warm capable organiser who would enjoy working with and motivating mentally handicapped adults to run a Whole Food Co-Operative? Could you spare at least one day a week for the next six months to get this project off the ground? Disabled access available - please contact Corinne Silver at the Kingston Volunteer Bureau, 36a Fife Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1SY. Telephone: 01-546 0184.

FOOD QUALITY CAMPAIGN would welcome help. Following the launch of the London Food Commission's Food Quality Campaign, we are being flooded with enquiries from the public. The Campaign aims to educate the public about the hidden food adulteration which can undermine the public's efforts to eat a healthy diet. Can you help? Tel Dr Tim Lang, The London Food Commission, at 88 Old Street, London, EC1 (01-253-9513)

WEST LONDON Family Service Unit are in need of Volunteer Playworkers for a Summer Playscheme for children aged 5-13, from August 1 to 26. Experience in craft or games activities are valued qualities but energy and sensitivity to children's needs are the essential ingredients. We can offer expenses and support. Tel: Cathrine Fitzgerald 01 229 9941.

FULL-TIME VOLUNTEERS are needed to work with single homeless men in 50-bed hostel sited in Bristol for a minimum period of 6 months. We will provide separate accommodation plus £37 p.w. Please contact: Mary Garvey at Redwood House, 1 Wade Street, Bristol, BS2 9DS. (0272 556358)

F.L.A.T. (Facility for Living and Assessment Together) requires Community Project Assistants. The F.L.A.T. Project trains and assesses peope who have learning dificulties (mental handicap) to live more independently in the community. Hours: 35 per week and 1/2 sleep in duties. In return: food and personal allowance of £146 per month, free accommodation and bills. Interested? Tel: 01-403-1542.

THE ELCHANAN ELKES Association for Intercommunity Understanding. Volunteers required in Israel 15 Oct to 15 Dec to work with the mentally handicapped. Short-term projects: 28 Nov to 18 Dec with aged; 1 to 28 Dec with mentally handicapped; 11 to 28 December; Botanical Gardens. Volunteers pay their own fare and insurance. Telephone 0533 415582 or 0533 775369.

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This is an exciting and challenging opportunity for the right person, who is likely to have substantial management and developmental experience with a social services or housing agency.

Salary: £10,191 - £12,075 (plus cost of living increase from 01:07:88) plus car and pension scheme.

Job description and application form, etc. are available from:

The Personnel Officer, Simon Community Northern Ireland,
155 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HR, Northern Ireland
Tel: (0232) 232882

Closing date for applications: 18th August, 1988

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- Experience of fund raising desirable.
- This post will be a ONE YEAR CONTRACT with the possibility of renewal.

For job description and application form please contact Diane McShane, 5-6 Anglers Lane, NW5 3DG (01-485-3021)

Closing date for receipt of application: 19th August.

M.I.C. is an Equal Opportunities Employer. Applications from users or ex-users of mental health services are welcome.

ETHNIC MINORITY BUSINESS ADVISER

North London Base

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Fullemploy aim to improve the employment prospects of minority ethnic communities (mainly Caribbean/Asian) in England and Wales, mainly through the provision of vocational training at centres around the country.

Enterprise training is one area we focus on, and in conjunction with Islington Council a person to provide wide-ranging advice and support to minority ethnic businesses is sought.
Detailed knowledge of the needs of small businesses, particularly relating to financial management & systems, will be needed, along with good interpersonal and communication skills. Fullemploy is fundamentally committed to equal opportunities and positive action strategies, and the successful applicant will be able to demonstrate an ability to operate within this context. Of particular relevance will be an awareness of the specific problems facing minority ethnic businesses.

Applications from people from minority ethnic communities will be especially welcome, as they are under-represented at this level in Fullemploy.

A salary of £13,250 is on offer for the post; other benefits include six weeks annual leave, and a contributory pension scheme.

For an application form and further information contact the Personnel Unit at Fullemploy, 102 Park Village East, London, NW1 3SP. Tel: 01-387 1222 ext 205. Closing date: 5 August 1988; Interviews are planned for 17 August 1988.

FULLEMPLOY – WORKING FOR EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

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EXPERIENCE	in group work; family therapy; bioenergetics; encounter; gestalt; psychodrama and hypnosis...
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For further information and informal discussion contact Trevor Emdon, Clinical Nurse Manager, St. Albans (0727) 55555, extension 3381 or 3383, or write to arrange an informal visit at the address below.

For application form and job description contact Mrs P. Hair, Personnel Officer, Hill End Hospital, St. Albans, AL4 ORB. Telephone St Albans 55555, extension 3389.

CLOSING DATE: 5th August 1988.

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SOUTHWARK CONSORTIUM

FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

(in conjunction with Camberwell Health Authority)

SUPPORTED HOUSING SERVICE

Support Workers

Salary Scale: £7579 - £8894 p.a. inc. of London Weighting and 10% Shift Allowance.

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The Supported Housing Service is based on a philosophy which values the people it serves as full citizens with the right to respect and dignity at all times.

Each of our houses has a team of Support Workers whose role it is to work with individuals to assist them in becoming skilful, integrated and contributing members of the community.

We now require a member of enthusiastic people of differing ages and backgrounds to join one of these teams.

Application forms and job descriptions are available from and returnable to the Unit Personnel Department, Community/Priority Care Services, Administration Block, St. Giles Hospital, St. Giles Road, SE5 (Ansaphone 01-701 0126).

Please state that you are applying for a Consortium post.

There is no closing date as interviews are held regularly.

SOUTHWARK CONSORTIUM IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

Chief Executive's

Complaints Officer (Race Relations)

Salary £11,322-£12,075 Post No. C148

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You will need to:-

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- demonstrate your ability to deal with conflict and to work under pressure

Previous applicants need not re-apply; they will be considered automatically.

A place may be available at The Workplace Nursery for employees with children 6 mths - 5 yrs old.
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Application form (returnable by 12th August 1988) and further details from Director of Personnel and Management Services, New Walk Centre, Welford Place, Leicester LE1 6ZG. Tel (0533) 549922 ext 7099.

As part of the City Council's commitment to an Equal Opportunity Policy, applications are welcome from people regardless of marital status, sex, race, sexual orientation or disability. Disabled persons are guaranteed an interview if suitably qualified and/or experienced. Job sharing applications are welcome for all jobs.

Leicester City Council

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If you think you measure up to these requirements and can demonstrate the vision and commitment to take on the challenge, please write or telephone for an information pack to: The Chief Personnel and Management Services Officer, Kirklees Metropolitan Council, Pearl Assurance House, John William Street, Huddersfield HD1 1BA. Telephone 0484 22133 ext 3107. Completed applications to be returned by 8th August 1988.

KIRKLEES OPERATES AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY FULL DETAILS OF WHICH WILL BE SUPPLIED TO ALL APPLICANTS

DEPUTY WARDEN

Required at Elizabeth Fry Hostel, Reading. A Home Offfice Approved Hostel accepting men and women on Probation, Bail and Parole, and offering specialist support to Mothers with Babies and Pregnant Women. This appointment is for a fixed term of 1 year with possible renewal thereafter. Ideal for 1989 CQSW applicant, or newly qualified person.

Candidates should be over 25 years of age with previous experience in residential work, and proven organisational and administrative skills. He/she will be required to coordinate the programme of life skills activities, assist in the training of Junior Staff and help the Warden develop policies and manage practice in accordance with local Probation Service strategy.

Appointment subject to NJC Conditions of Service.
Salary - Grade 4 SCP 22-27 (Currently under review)

For informal discussion, job description and application form contact the Warden, Elizabeth Fry Hostel, 6 Coley Avenue, Reading, RG1 6LQ. Tel: 0734 572385

Closing date for application 12th August 1988

Interview dates 30/31 August 1988

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SHROPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

(An Equal Opportunities Employer)
(Pay Award pending for all posts)

(a) Senior Social Worker (SW3 plus two increments) £10,887-£12,804

The Special Child Care Unit was established in 1974 and responds to actual and suspected physical and sexual abuse of children, serving the whole of Shropshire, a Team Leader, 7 Senior Social Workers, 4 Social Workers, a Social Work Assistant and 5 Clerical staff. As a Senior Social Worker your main responsibility will be to investigate referrals of physical or sexual abuse and to carry a managed caseload, with cases requiring long term involvement being passed on to the Social Worker in the Unit or Social Workers in the Area Teams. Over the last 14 years and Unit has developed considerable expertise and experience in handling child abuse cases, and the Unit also offers:

— regular supervision and good team support
— groupwork with sexually abused children
— good working relationships with other agencies, especially in the field of making assessments of abusing families.

For an informal discussion, please contact Chris Brannan, Casework Consultant, on Shrewsbury 253984 or Stephen Lewis, Team Leader, on Shrewsbury 253985.

(b) Fostering/Adoptions Officer — SW3 £10,191-£12,075

Applications are invited from persons holding a professional social work qualification, interested in joining the Family Placement Team based in Shrewsbury.

Duties will include:

— the preparation of children and families for placement through group work combined with individual assessments;
— the imaginative use of publicity and advertising;
— making plans for individual children.

Shropshire is committed to family placements for children in care, and considerable success has been achieved in recent years.

(c) Social Worker (Mencap Handicap) — SW2/3 £8,988-£12,075

Required to join the Eastern Area team, Telford, on a permanent basis and the Southern Area, Shrewsbury, on a temporary basis, to cover a member of staff attending a two year training course.

The successful applicants will assist in the delivery of field social work services to people with a mental handicap and their families, including developmental, liaison and co-ordination role. ASW applicants are able to become one quickly.

For informal discussions contact Eastern Area Officer, Mr J Addison, on Telford 254371 and Southern Area Officer Mr S Robinson, on Shrewsbury 253941.

(d) Social Worker (Mental Health) — SW3 £10,191-£12,075

Applications are invited from professionally qualified and experienced practitioners who would like to specialise in developing good quality social health services as well as acting as a resource to the rest of the area team.

For an informal discussion contact Mr S Robinson, Southern Area Officer, on Shrewsbury 253941.

(e) Social Worker (Part-time) Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry — SW2 £4,494-£5,268

18½ hours per week by arrangement, to join the team based at this 'Centre of Excellence', which has a national reputation.

Informal discussions with Senior Social Worker, Mrs Val Suffolk, on Oswestry 655311.

(f) Hospital Social Worker — SW1/3 £7,833-£12,075

Additional post with an Area Team to work in the South of the County. Opportunity to be involved in planning and applying community alternatives for elderly, infirm people in collaboration with the Health Authority.

For an informal discussion, contact Mr S Robinson, on Shrewsbury 253941.

(g) Temporary Social Worker — SW2/3 £8,988-£12,075

To join the Central Area intake Team, Shrewsbury, on a temporary basin, to cover maternity leave. Applications considered for part of full-time work. This team deals with most referrals in addition to work with clients having a mental handicap or mental health problem.

For an informal discussion contact Mr T Jones, on Shrewsbury 253859.

(h) Social Workers — SW2/3 £8,988-£12,075

Required to join area Social Work Teams and carry a generic caseload or have an opportunity to develop interests in other fields.

(i) Social Workers for the Visually Impaired — SW2 £8,988-£10,536

Are you a qualified Social Worker with experience in social work with the visually impaired? Are you a person with enthusiasm and initiative? Would you like to work in a specialist post providing social work to the visually impaired?

The Department is committed to providing the best possible service to this client group, and the successful applicant must have the desire to implement the Department's commitment in this field.

A vacancy exists in the Eastern Area Team, Telford, please telephone Mr J Addison on Telford 254371 for an informal discussion.

A vacancy will arise in the near future with the Central Area Team, Shrewsbury, on a temporary basic to cover for a member of staff attending a two year training course. Please telephone Mr R Jones on Shrewsbury 253859 for an informal discussion.

(j) Rehabilitation Officers for Blind — Scale 5/6 £8,988-£10,887

Shropshire has a well established team of specialists working with the visually impaired. Applications are invited from persons possessing qualification in rehabilitation to provide the following services:

— professional input to the rehabilitation of the visually impaired.
— provide training on communication and daily living skills for the visually handicapped.
— give professional support and encouragement to other professional workers in relation to specialist services for visually impaired.

One of the posts will be based in the Eastern Area Team, but will provide services to the Eastern and Southern Area teams.

The other post will be based in the Central Area Team, to provide services in the central and Northern Area Teams.

For an informal discussion, please contact Mrs B Evans, on Shrewsbury 253823.

(k) Mobility Officer for the Visually Impaired £8,988-£10,887

Required to cover the North Shropshire District, Oswestry District and Shrewsbury and Atcham District of the County. A qualified worker is needed to teach mobility skills to the visually impaired in Shropshire.

The work will be with both adults and children. It also involves support to local groups, and close liaison with the Shropshire Voluntary Association for the Blind.

For further information, please telephone Mrs Barbara Evans, Principal Social Worker, on Shrewsbury 253823.

Application forms and job descriptions for all above mentioned posts are available from: The Director of Social Services Department, The Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, SHREWSBURY, SY2 6ND. Tel: 0743 253712. Closing date: 27thJuly, 1988

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Use your business experience to help others grow

The Small Firms Service makes a significant contribution to the development and growth of small businesses through its regional counselling teams. Small Firms Service Counsellors offer impartial, confidential and professional advice to small enterprises on all aspects of running and developing a business, drawing upon their own commercial experience and expertise.

The Small Firms Service is now seeking men and women to join its existing teams of counsellors in *the West Midlands*.

Applicants should display general business acumen, have an understanding of the needs of small businesses at various stages of their development and an ability to impart their knowledge and experience to others.

The work is vocational in nature, occupying about 10 days a month. It should appeal to those who feel that they have time and experience to offer. Modest fees (currently £40 per day) are paid, together with travelling expenses. Applicants should be under 62 years of age and have their own transport.

For further details and an application form please write to:

The Small Firms Centre
9th Floor, Alpha Tower
Suffolk St, Queensway
Birmingham B1 1TT
or Telephone: 021 643 3344
Closing date 29.7.1988

Small Firms Service

The Department of Employment is an equal opportunities employer. Applications from all sectors of the community are welcome and will be considered on their merit regardless of sex, race or disability.

A Service by the Department of Employment

THE YOUNG WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION OF GREAT BRITAIN

requires

Director

for Princess Margaret House in Southampton, which provides accommodation for 65 residents and facilities for disabled women.

Duties include staff supervision and the administration, selection and admission of the residents and the promotion of their welfare.

This is a residential post and a two-bedroom self-contained flat is provided. Salary on scale between £6179 and £7579 per annum.

The successful applicant will be in sympathy with the Christian aims of the Association.

Please telephone for an application form on 0865 726111 (24 hour answering service) quoting Ref: H44

Closing date for applications: 5th August 1988

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

Student Counsellor

Applications are invited for this post in the Student Health Service from graduates with qualifications and experience in the field of counselling. Experience in an educational institution is highly desirable. Salary within the range £12,150 - £15,720 p.a. according to qualifications and experience. Superannuation. Particulars and application forms (returnable by August 2nd) from:

The Registrar, The University, MANCHESTER M13 9PL (Tel: 061 275 2028)

Quote ref. 177/88/NS.

THE UNIVERSITY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER

Edinburgh Cyrenian Trust

Co-ordinator

We run therapeutic communities for young homeless people. Each community has a residential social worker and a small group of volunteer residential workers.

Our work is challenging and offers hope because our doors open when many others stay closed.

We need a senior worker for management, representation and coordination as well as substantial direct work with residents. The successful applicant should have a relevant qualification and experience, as well as a genuine commitment to caring in the area of homelessness.

Salary: £12,075 - £13,188 (as near to NJC conditions as possible)

If you would like to know more please contact: Edinburgh Cyrenian Trust, 20 Broughton Place, Edinburgh, EH1 3RX or 031-556-4971 (details and application form).

Closing date: August 15, 1988.

Political Assistant

Labour Front Bench Spokes-person requires Political Assistant in House of Commons. Research experience and evidence of commitment to Labour and trade union movement essential, knowledge of Irish politics an advantage.

Salary circa £13,000 (age & experience)

Apply with c.v. and covering letter outlining relevant experience and including details of 2 referees, to Brian Hackland, Rm 1/32, Norman Shaw North, House of Commons, SW1 OAA by 25 JULY 1988.

TOOLS FOR SELF RELIANCE

3 W Solidarity Organisation seeks Northern field-worker. One year. £5,450.

Telephone: 0703 869697.

OV SELECTION

have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers.

Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

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CHILD PROTECTION - Additional Posts.

NEWHAM SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Opportunities for experienced, committed social workers to specialise in work with child abuse and neglect.

Newham Council has created a range of posts in order to strengthen the Department's work with child abuse and neglect. Our aim is to bring extra experience, specialist knowledge and improved supervisory resources into our hard-pressed Community Services Division and to provide greater support for staff working with vulnerable children and high risk families.

The additional posts will provide opportunities for developing new approaches to child protection and for co-operative work with other disciplines and agencies.

Newham has a multi-racial population. A large proportion of the population originates from the Indian Sub-Continent, whilst others are of African-Caribbean origin. The Borough is an inner-city area with a rising population of under-fives and of single parent households.

Newham Social Services Department is determined to develop its resources to meet these needs. We are positively committed to an equal opportunities approach in the provision of community social services and this has important implications for child protection and child care practice in general.

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3 CHILD CARE CO-ORDINATORS
Salary: £14991 - £16167 (including additional plus payment)

THE EMBARGO PLACED ON THESE POSTS BY NALGO HAS NOW BEEN LIFTED. CANDIDATES WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY SHORTLISTED WILL NOW BE INTERVIEWED – NEW APPLICANTS ARE WELCOME.

The posts will be based at each of our Area Offices, in East Ham, Stratford and Canning Town. The Child Care Co-Ordinators will help to develop Area social work responses to local child care and child protection needs, convene and chair Child Protection Case Conferences and provide advice and support for field staff on difficult cases and new initiatives. The post holders will deputise for the Area Controllers, particularly in relation to child protection work.

You should be a qualified social worker with solid post-qualification experience, supervisory skills and a sound practice background in child protection work. Sensitivity, adaptability, communication skills and experience of working or living in a multi-cultural community are all also required.

4 SENIOR PRACTITIONERS (CHILD PROTECTION)
Salary: £14346 - £14991 (including additional plus payment)

THE EMBARGO PLACED ON THESE POSTS BY NALGO HAS NOW BEEN LIFTED. CANDIDATES WHO WERE PREVIOUSLY SHORTLISTED WILL NOW BE INTERVIEWED – NEW APPLICANTS ARE WELCOME.

These are permanent posts which will be initially based at our Area Two Office in Stratford and at Area Three Office in Canning Town.

We are looking for experienced, qualified social workers with a special interest in work with child abuse and neglect (including child sexual abuse) and a sound understanding of social work with children and families. The successful candidates will carry complex child protection cases, offer advice, back-up and specialist supervision to colleagues and lead staff support and discussion groups on child protection matters. There will be opportunities to develop your own skills and we undertake to provide personal and group support and good in-service training opportunities.

TRAINING OFFICER (CHILD PROTECTION)
Salary: £12114 - £13965 (S01/S02)

RE-ADVERTISEMENT

We are looking for a mature, flexible person with a special interest in child protection training. You will be based in the Department's Training Section. The successful candidate will have a CQSW or other relevant qualification, a sound knowledge of Social Services provision, practice-based experience of work with child abuse and neglect (including child sexual abuse) and some experience of staff development work, whether through supervision or training.

If you are a good communicator who is able to lead, stimulate and direct discussion, respond to changing service requirements and keep in touch with legislation, policy and current thinking in the child protection field, we will welcome your application.

We can offer you comradeship and stimulation in a close, supportive team, strong links with other child protection specialists and good in-service training, as well as an opportunity to design and implement new training initiatives.

The Department has a strong commitment to in-service and post-qualifying training; regular supervision and group support will also be available for those appointed.

We are committed to the development of anti-racist and anti-sexist policies and practice. Job sharers are well supported and because of the multi-cultural nature of our community, we particularly welcome applications from black people and those from other minority ethnic groups.

If you think that you can respond to the challenge of a specialist post in child protection, if you are able to motivate and support others, are sensitive to the needs of consumers and colleagues and enjoy working co-operatively, we want to hear from you.

Application forms and detailed Job Specifications may be obtained from: The Director of Social Services, 99 The Grove, Stratford E15, or by telephoning 01-519 2095 (24 hrs).

Closing date: 29th July, 1988.

Please address yourself to the issues outlined in this advertisement and in the Job Specification when completing your application form.

Newham Council is committed to an equal opportunities policy. This means that the Council is committed to ensuring that no job applicant or employee will receive less favourable treatment on the grounds of race, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or is disadvantaged by condition of requirements which cannot be seen to be justifiable.
All jobs are open for job sharers, unless otherwise stated.

Newham
An Equal Opportunity Authority

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SPRINGBURN AND POSSILPARK HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD

DIRECTOR

Salary £15,186-£17,474

Springburn and Possilpark Housing Association Ltd is a community based Housing Association operating in the north of Glasgow.

The Management Committee invite applications for the post of Director.

The Association owns 800 properties and has a Cash Planning Target for the current financial year of £4.3 million.

Its first new-build development for shared ownership is scheduled to commence on site shortly. The Director will be responsible to the Management Committee for the day to day management of the Associations affairs. Ideally candidates for this demanding post should hold a professional qualification for housing or a related discipline such as planning.

It is essential that applicants should have a detailed knowledge of the work of the housing associations and experience in management and motivation of staff.

There are no application forms for this post. Candidates are asked to submit written applications enclosing a full c.v. and giving names and addresses of 2 referees.

Applications should be sent to Mrs K Gow/Chairperson at the following address: 223 Saracen Street, Glasgow G22 5JW.

Further details and a job description can be obtained from Springburn and Possilpark Housing Association Ltd, 2 Hillkirk Street Lane, Glasgow G21 1TE. Telephone 041-558 2273.

The closing date for applications is Monday 8th August 1988.

Springburn and Possilpark Housing Association is an equal opportunities employer.

NUPE

Britains Caring Union

Senior Research Officer

The National Union of Public Employees, Britain's fifth largest Trade Union, and one of the leading trade unions in the public sector, with over 650,000 members, invites applications for the post of Senior Research Officer.

The postholder will be responsible to the Deputy General Secretary for the allocation of work and resources within the Research Section, and will be responsible for providing the Executive Council and Senior Officers with up-to-date research across the whole range of issues that currently confront NUPE.

The successful applicant will be part of the Senior Officer team at Head Office and will be expected to work with other Senior Officers in implementing the decisions agreed through the Union's democratic structure.

The Senior Research Officer will be required to live within a reasonable distance of the Union's Head Office at Woolwich, where the post will be based.

The salary for this post will be £18,739 per annum rising to £20,329 per annum inclusive of a London Weighting allowance. A car will be provided. *NUPE is an equal opportunity employer.*

For an application form, please send a postcard giving your name and address to: Maureen Underwood, NUPE, 20 Grand Depot Road, London, SE18 6SF. The closing date for applications is **6th September 1988.**

NUPE

Classified Advertisements

Telephone 01-739 1645

BLOOMSBURY HEALTH AUTHORITY

Mental Health Unit

NURSING ASSISTANT POST

Latimer House Day Hospital

An enthusiastic person with an interest in elderly mentally ill people is required to join a multi-disciplinary team. Opportunities are available to develop knowledge and skills.

It may be possible to offer temporary accommodation for anyone considering a move to London. For information and to arrange an informal visit please contact: Sue Nichols, Charge Nurse, Latimer House Day Hospital, 40 Hanson Street, London, W1. Telephone: 01-380-9188.

For an application form write to: D. A. Pennington, Room 4, Hanson Ward, St. Pancras Hospital, 4 St. Pancras Way, London, NW1.

Closing date: Friday 5th August, 1988.

WELFARE BENEFIT CO-ORDINATOR

POA £14,241 p.a. - £15,897 p.a. inclusive

In response to changes in the Social Security System, we have established a new post in the Social Services Department.

You will be required to:

* Give professional advice on welfare benefits.
* Organise training and information systems.
* Liaise with voluntary agencies and co-ordinate welfare benefit advice.
* Develop and monitor welfare rights policies within the department.

You will need a good knowledge of Social Security legislation, combined with an appreciation of the service demands on a department which places emphasis on the client as the consumer.

In return we can offer:

* Flexitime (Nine day fortnight).
* Generous annual leave.
* Relocation expenses.

For more information contact Maureen Frost or John Frankcom on Uxbridge 50511. Interviews will be held on 1st September 1988.

HILLINGDON
THE WEST LONDON BOROUGH

Application forms quoting reference number SS/99/139XE available from the Personnel Division, Civic Centre, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 1UW. Telephone Uxbridge 50589 (24 hour answering service available). Closing date 29th July 1988.

Hillingdon as an equal opportunities employer, welcomes applications from candidates irrespective of race, sex, marital status, age, sexual orientation or disability.

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ENVIRONMENT FEATURE

JULY 29 1988

An excellent opportunity for Local Authority Environment Depts. & Pressure Groups to place adverts.

A special rate of £11 per s.c.c. for related posts in this issue.

For further information ask for Hazel, Carol Anne or Chris on

01-739-1645

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Research

TV RESEARCHER
SEEKS
people with experience of the type of serious illness which brought financial catastrophe to some middle class families before the N.H.S. Telephone Marc Sigworth or Jude Allen on:

01 743 1272

GAY MALE FEMINIST plans to start discussion group: would welcome any ideas for topics. Write Box (28) 047.

Seminars

TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE OF MARITAL STUDIES
Marital, Family and Client-Worker Interaction
Practice-based weekly seminars for the helping professions.
October 1988-May 1989.
Application forms from Benita Dyal, Tavistock Institute of Marital Studies, Tavistock Centre, 120 Belsize Lane, London, NW3 5BA. Telephone No: 01-435 7111.
Closing date: 19th September, 1988.

Publications

SOCIAL SERVICES RESEARCH GROUP
(London Region)
Digest of Research Planning & Development
Includes over 270 current projects, covering Social Services and Voluntary Organisations, fully indexed with contact person for further details. £3 to S.S.R.G. members £5.50 to non-members (including post and packing). Cheques payable to S.S.R.G. Available from:

JONATHAN TIPLER
HACKNEY SOCIAL SERVICES
205 MORNING LANE, LONDON, E9 6JX

Courses/Training

A Three Module course to
"TRAIN TRAINERS FOR ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: FOCUS ON RACISM"
The course is aimed at people who are either trainers or have a training function within their job description.
Contact Carole Litchmore, TCRJ, 56 Camberwell Road, London, SE5 OEN
Telephone: 01-703-4136
Closing date 2 September 1988.

Billboard — Theatre

NATIONAL THEATRE 01 928 2252 Olivier (open stage) 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE, THE SHAUGHRAUN by Dion Boucicault. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) THE CHANGELING, CAT ON A HOT TIN ROOF. Cottesloe (small stage) CYMBELINE, THE WINTER'S TALE, THE TEMPEST. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01 928 2256.

THE SHAW SOCIETY presents a birthday tribute to G.B.S. - "MAJOR BARBARA" with a prelude presented by Ellen Pollock, Toni Kanal & Benny Green. Shaw's Corner, Ayot St. Lawrence, Herts. July 23rd & 24th at 6.15 pm. Admission £3 (Concessions £2). Refreshments. For further information ring 690 2325.

Personal

COMPUTER ENTHUSIAST, employed middle-aged science graduate, seeks spare-time voluntary work in Central/East London. Teach/help research/administration. Box (29) 049.

Holidays/Travel

DISCOUNTED FLIGHTS Italy, France, Scandinavia, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Austria. Yugo. Charter/Schedule. AIRFORCE. 01-506-2233. ATOL 1817.

JOURNEY LATIN America. Low cost flights, holiday journeys, 3-6 weeks, JLA, 16 Devonshire Road, London, W4 2HD. 01-747-3108.

GORBACHEV'S RUSSIA. Special women's visit. Discussions with Soviet women, official sightseeing, help getting beyond the tourist map. 8 nights December, Leningrad-Moscow, £479. PO Box 171, Liverpool, L69 8DB.

Booksellers

SCARCE BOOK Service: Social-Economic History; World Politics. State wants. 01-876-7254. Hammersmith Books, Barnes High Street, SW13 9LR.

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion Street, London, WC1 Telephone: 01-242-5822.

Meetings

THEOSOPHY Wisdom Religion Informal meetings Sundays 8pm on Reincarnation, Karma, Death, Clairvoyance, Spiritualism, Cyclic law, SAS for programme, information: ULT, 62 Queens Gardens, London, W2 3AH.

Heartsearch

DATELINE'S PSYCHOLOGICALLY accurate introductions lead to pleasant friendships, spontaneous affairs and firm, lasting relationships including marriage. All ages, all areas. Free details from: Dateline Computer Dating, Dept. (7NS), 23 Abingdon Rd, London, W8. Phone: 01-938-1011.

ENRICH YOUR Social Life! Designed for the discerning and sophisticated, Savoir Vivre provides more interesting introductions. Send SAE to: Savoir Vivre, Ref: NS L, Tynron, Thornhill. DG3 4LG or tel 084 82 611 anytime.

THINK! Wouldn't you prefer to join a photographic introduction agency that cares about your individual requirements and offers a friendly and confidential service? Wouldn't you prefer to join the Singles Register? 458 8344.

OLD FRIENDS: an introduction agency for the over forties. Loneliness is not inevitable. Details from: Anne Brent, 18a Highbury New Park, London, N5 2DB. Tel: 01-226-5432.

DRAWING DOWN THE MOON "The Mensa of Introduction Agencies" (The Independent). Tel: 01-937-8880 or 01-938-2151.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, 50'ish, youthful, attractive, cultural interests plus slightly fading sense of fun, seeks male companion, attractive and intelligent enough to nurture the former and restore the latter. North Cheshire/Manchester. Reply Box (29) 048.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, 49, interests left politics & Human Rights needs a caring man to walk, talk & laugh with. Midlands Box (29) 050.

REAL PRINCESS, very young 41, seeks highly sensitive aware bloke for frighteningly honest, warm friendly relationship. University or College graduate, good looks essential, any nationality. Manchester/Cheshire area. Box (29) 051.

EAST KENT GUY, scientist, writer. 50's. 'Free Child' type, seeks young woman for a caring emotionally/intellectually equal relationship. Interested in Astronomy, Youthwork, cycling/YHA, Anarchism, Kids. Love to hear from you! Write Box (29) 052.

IF YOU ARE A DESIRABLE LADY wishing to be seduced contact me. I am based near London but willing to travel up to 3 hours by car. Other details when I reply. Box (29) 053.

WOMAN, 44, DIVORCED looking for lively man with good sense of humour to enjoy shared interests which include gardening, music, travel etc. Oxford area. Box (29) 054.

DO YOU ENJOY THE THEATRE (RST & NT especially), opera and classical concerts? My theatre going friends have moved, leaving me seeking niew companion(s) male or female for regular London visits, sharing expenses. Write to Box (29) 055.

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THE DIGGER

Michael Leapman gives his down-to-earth views on sowing in midsummer

The seed packets and gardening books tell us there is still time to make our last successional sowings of summer vegetables such as carrots, radishes, peas and lettuce. But I suspect the concept of successional sowing is more honoured on the printed page than on the plot itself. "Put in a few seeds every fortnight to avoid a glut," the experts advise sagely. But even if you are that well organised, where do you find the space? By May my allotment is usually bursting at the seams, and I have to give away plants from the main spring sowing.

By now, it is true, some space is opening up. The broad beans and early peas are finished and the turnips, spinach and earliest lettuce are running to seed. If you planted any over-wintering Japanese onion sets last autumn they will have matured already. (Or a few will: I have grown them for the last three or four seasons and have never been able to get more than a handful to develop properly. The Japanese should perhaps stick to electronics.)

Yet even if you now have the space, sowing in midsummer is not as easy as the seed salesmen would have us think. True, the soil is warm, so germination should be rapid. But it is also often hard and dusty—not at all the soggy, welcoming texture of the spring. Watering can compact it even more. You need to incorporate a lot of moist compost to get it into the proper condition for sowing.

Even then, you're gambling with the weather. If we are in for a warm, dry spell you will have to water every couple of days to keep the seedlings going: no use if you are about to go off on holiday, but then *real* gardeners don't take holidays. (Watering is not much of a chore if you are growing the stuff in your garden, but my Brixton allotment is a ten-minute drive away. I normally only get out there at weekends, although in very hot weather I have added a midweek visit for irrigation and harvesting.)

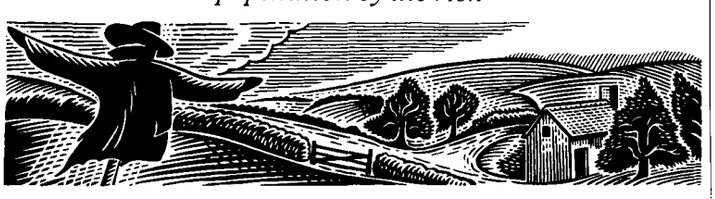
Lettuce, in particular, does best in cool weather. It will not tolerate extreme heat. Some years ago I had a garden in New York and I could never get lettuce to survive beyond the end of June in that over-heated climate. Brixton is less tropical, and it is certainly worth trying a late sowing, although my own strike rate with them is only around 50 per cent. Mildew and other diseases are more prevalent in the hot weather.

Some varieties of lettuce are designed for sowing towards the end of August, missing the worst of the heat, maturing in October and November. These will generally work if there is not a prolonged warm spell and drought in September. I have also had modest success with the autumn-sown varieties designed to survive the winter and head up in spring: Valdor and Arctic King are two. These are naturally rather tougher than those harvested in summer but they appear at a time when lettuce is dear in the shops. (Beware the Iceberg trap. Despite its name, it is a crisp summer variety introduced from the US a few years ago. At the first sign of ice it will perish.)

We had a tremendous crop of raspberries this year. The canes are ten years old now and according to the best books they should be replaced, but it seems like vandalism to pull them up when they are so prolific. Now is the time to act to ensure next year's crop. The canes that fruited this year should be cut back to ground level, the rest tidied up and thinned out, leaving next year's crop space to develop. Think ahead.

FRINGE BENEFITS

Colin Ward marches into the field of rural repopulation by the rich



John MacGregor, the Minister of Agriculture, told the Commons last month that annual payments of up to £200 a hectare will be offered to farmers who set aside at least a fifth of their arable land by taking it out of production for five years. To qualify, land would have to be kept fallow or put to woodland; it could not be grazed or developed for residential, industrial or retail purposes.

Quick as a flash, the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) responded with a discussion paper suggesting that rather than paying farmers to "set aside" up to a million acres, it would be more sensible to change the land use from farming and turn it into "country estates" with planning consent for a suitable house, stables, ponds and parkland and, of course, a few staff cottages.

Here is a nice example of the survival of Victorian values: this is exactly what happened 100 years ago, when in the agricultural depression the newly rich bought their way into rural lifestyles. The venerable weekly *Country Life* was founded to give them hints on keeping up with the county families. A wave of newly-established rival journals shows that this aspiration has been revived.

There is another reason, of course, for the RICS paper. A Norwich surveyor explains that estates of 50 to a 100 acres could be sold at, say, £15,000 an acre instead of the figure of £100,000 now being charged for a single plot with planning permission. The Norwich surveyor said he was besieged with inquiries like, "Should we buy land in order to get it set aside?"

In the process of rural repopulation, planning consent is worth 100 times its weight in gold. But it isn't easily won, so if the bottom really is dropping out of the grotesquely subsidised cereal prices of the last decade, and thus land prices, it's as well to settle for what you can get.

It was like this, of course, long before we were alleged to have a planning system. In 1875, Tarbuck's *Handbook of House Property* included the apt little verse: "The richest crop for any field/Is a crop of bricks for it to yield./The richest crop that it can grow/Is a crop of houses all in a row." At that time everyone deplored the way the country was being de-populated by the poor. Now—apart from the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors—we deplore the way in which it is being repopulated by the rich. Years ago the geographer Peter Hall described the green belt as "a civilised form of apartheid" and the whole machinery of planning, justified for its allegedly redistributive effect, has been hijacked by the secure and affluent to bolster their automatic freedom of choice.

In my own patch, unofficial bodies like the Suffolk Rural Housing Association, with little support and less cash, have been drawing attention to the plight of local people setting up home, let alone job seekers in growing East Anglia, hopelessly outclassed in the property boom.

Our local *East Anglian Daily Times*, not known for its radicalism, comments editorially that, "A number of councillors, speaking from experience, saw little or no hope of the ordinary house buyer receiving any benefit from cheaper land prices. Builders, in their view, were unduly involved with land-hoarding and speculation. Since the development value of land is created entirely by the community, it is right that the community should benefit from it. A tax on it would be fair and it would lead to cheaper housing and to better planning. It is impossible to understand why the government should be considering any other form of replacement for rates."

This is an absolutely crucial issue in rural England, with speculators balancing their chances of set-aside or sell-off, determined by a district council's development control officer, but modified by the local assessment of the way the DoE will swing on appeal. This ministerial judgment is in fact the way in which policy is revealed to those hard-pressed local officers. Mr Ridley has just issued two new policy statements on rural housing. I shall study them eagerly.

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ENDGAMES

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 3035 Set by Russell Lucas
Excerpts from future hagiographies of St Robert Maxwell, with details of mortifications, miracles, martyrdom, location and nature of relics etc. Not more than 150 words. Entries to be in by 3 August.

No 3032 Set by E O Parrott
Reports by social workers on any famous character in fiction.

Report by Grace Elegy
Firstly, I must apologise for so stupidly getting the comp number wrong—college has been pretty fraught lately with mods and schools, plus various undergraduates needing straightening out. I set it as 3031 instead of 3032, as was spotted by some of the more eagle-eyed amongst you. This was no less than I expected from so bright a bunch of students, but although I added a couple of points for this (plus the usual two for getting your names and addresses correct), I'm afraid this made no difference at all to the final outcome. I have awarded ten pounds to the winners, plus an extra five to May Day for that wonderful dramatic timing I have come to know so well.

Mrs Darling is clearly distressed by the children's disappearance, blaming herself for having accepted a dinner engagement for that night. She seems a thoroughly normal person, as does her stockbroker husband. Admirably, they have both taken up flying lessons since the tragedy.

Like most people of their class, the Darlings have some eccentricities. Mr Darling travels to the City in a dog kennel and Mrs Darling tends to rummage in drawers for "a rolled-up shadow". It also seems that the children were exclusively cared for by a Newfoundland dog, but this is accepted as perfectly normal among people of such wealth and charm.

The daughter, Wendy, had spoken of encounters with a man and a woman called Peter Pan and Tinker Bell, and the police are treating this as a case of ransom, though no note has yet been received. No further action from us seems indicated, and we are all invited to a reception on Tuesday evening in the dog kennel, 6.30 p.m.

Alison Prince

The client is obviously suffering from senile dementia, and though he has lucid moments—he is aware the law militates against the underprivileged—most of the time he is grossly disturbed and irrational.

Mr Lear—he calls himself "King", one of his many delusions—is homeless. He has been sleeping in an abandoned moorland hut with a mentally disturbed vagrant and a travelling companion he calls a fool. He has three daughters, all in social group AB. I was able to contact two of them. They claim my client to be violently disruptive and to have absented himself from their homes. They feel that they can take no further responsibility for him. They say the other sister lives abroad and has not kept in touch with the family for years, after quarrelling with their father.

As he has no GP, I recommend Mr Lear's admittance to a geriatric ward at St Cockupp's for medical/psychiatric assessment.

May Day

Paddington Bear is now adequately fostered in caring and stable home unit of two adults (one male, one female, status: married) and two juveniles (no files). No apparent traumas from previously abandoned state (found on station concourse: no living relatives known) but evidence of deep-seated emotional insecurity in adherence to "comfort blanket" in form of familiar duffle coat, hat and boots. Defers under stress to Aunt Lucy—could be mother? (Prostitute?)

Acclimatised to English mores and dietary habits, but retains unhealthy over-reliance on high-sugar foods (marmalade sandwiches). However, displays disturbing lack of self-awareness within ethnic minority culture: suggest exploration of cultural (Peruvian) roots with trained counsellor to facilitate entry into multi-racial adult society.

Inclined to gender/role stereotyping (reinforced by attitudes within foster home: Mr Brown "works" in office, Mrs Brown services him in unwaged domestic role). Suggest 1-2 weeks in the Islington Consciousness-Crisis Centre to counterbalance middle-class indoctrination.

D A Prince

This client was abandoned at birth and his subsequent unofficial adoption was unsatisfactory. He was despised by the son of the house, used as cheap labour and subjected to racial taunts. What he interpreted as rejection by the daughter of the family contributed to his mental instability and alientation and precipitated his antisocial behaviour.

His highway robbery and card-sharping should be interpreted as a cry for help, the desperate ploy of the underprivileged to acquire status.

He feels keenly that he has only one name, given to him as to a dog, instead of the usual forename and surname. The correction of this by giving him a further identity, a determined effort to keep away from alcohol and cards, regular counselling, and his participation in local social gatherings will build up his self-esteem and enable him to enter into mature relationships.

George Moor

July 11. Mr Godot failed to keep appointment. No further action.

Martin F Jenkins

Young Paul Dombey is the only son of a one-parent family, his mother having died in childbirth. He is currently in the sole care of his father, Paul Dombey senior, and their relationship gives no cause for undue alarm as frequent and thorough medical examinations, anal and penile, have detected so sign whatever of abuse. Further study, however, is advisable into the possibly over-intense relationship between Paul and his teenage sister, Florence.

Educationally he is an underachiever but this is due to his dreamy introspective character: indeed his basic health is excellent and we would make no recommendation for his being taken into care. As our case loads are so heavy no further visits will be made for 18 months.

***

On our subsequent visit we learnt of the unfortunate death of Paul Dombey. At the inquest we shall again complain about the case loads as we did in the cases of Smike and Little Nell.

James Fidgen

Access to Ms C Harcup was difficult but I am satisfied that her condition is that of a domestic slave. Anonymity of contact must be protected (see att. statement of "Buttons").

Family has inherited wealth (barony, small decayed castle, magic forest) and aspirations to social grandeur (mostly balls). Client, rejected by stepmother and latter's daughter by prev. liaison (see "Buttons", loc. cit. on "Dame"). Spends much of her time picking up sticks for bent old ladies or sitting by Aga, fantasising about suddenly interrupted affair with imaginary transsexual foot-fetishiest Royal lover.

But stay awhile and all will make good sense
When next we meet at our case conference.

A Pumpkin Asst. S/W

IF THE CAP FITS

No 77

Although the *Sun* may think it was a "disastrous defeat", we think Ann Holmes did jolly well to cut the Tory majority from 4,447 to only 815 in the Kensington by-election last week. What words of comfort is Denis Healey whispering in her ear? Captions, speech or thinks bubbles on a postcard please by Friday 29 July. £10 book token for the lucky winner.

No 75: Winner

Kinnock: "Thanks, but I'd prefer a filofax."
(Nick Thomas, Bournemouth)

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CHESS

How well do you know the rules of the game? Probably just as well as you need to in order to enjoy playing—which for most people will be a matter of knowing the *constitutive* rules, the rules that make the game possible by saying what is a legal move. If everyone plays the game in the right spirit, agreement on those rules will be a sufficient consensus. So I hope you will ever find it, and if your chess is just of the friendly, social kind you jolly well should, or take your pawns elsewhere.

The pressures and rewards of competitive chess, however, create the sort of temptations that can sour good will and overmaster fair play. Illiberal common sense, presuming that if something is obviously wrong then it ought to be prohibited, would expect it to be against the laws to win a game through bribery. So show me where this matter is dealt with in the official Laws of Chess. Article 15.1, concerning the conduct of the players (in other words, what you mustn't do), looks to be the section to turn to. There we find the majestic clause (d): *It is forbidden to distract or annoy the opponent in any manner whatsoever.* Won't that cover the case?

Unfortunately not. Leaving aside the point that the maximum penalty is not exactly draconian (*even to the extent of the loss of the game*), the situation in which bribery is most likely to occur is one in which the offer is not going to annoy, unless insultingly small. So what authority can be invoked against players who fix results and buy titles? As the Laws stand, the whole burden of responsibility falls on the arbiter who, in Article 16, is empowered *to impose penalties on the players for any fault or infraction of the Laws.* Spotted Catch 22? Neither fixing nor bribery *is* an infraction of the current Laws. So it's all down to how an arbiter interprets the concept of a "fault". In any case, the arbiter's ability to penalise, being restricted to the context of a specific match or tournament, is not much of a deterrent when measured against the prospect of a Grandmaster title (which can mean money in the bank for the rest of your life).

All this might seem to suggest that the draft **Code of Ethics**, to be placed before the FIDE General Assembly during the Olympiad in Thessaloniki, is badly needed. But on the whole it would be better if it did not secure the two-thirds majority required, and if votes cast are representative of voices raised it will not do so. The drafting of the code had been delegated by FIDE's Executive Council to David Anderton. If anyone was qualified for the task, Anderton was. A solicitor by profession, as non-playing captain of the English team he has come as close as is humanly possible in world chess to being both universally popular and respected. But it always was going to be impossible to produce a code that would be effective and enforcible.

The draft Code does provide a penalty of up to 4 years' suspension from tournament play or FIDE office. That might actually serve to deter people from malpractice. It would certainly set them thinking whether the present constitution of FIDE delivers an executive fit to be entrusted with the power to deprive professional players of their livelihood. My own thinking is that the less code-making we can go in for, the better. The boast of unity that is FIDE's motto, *Gens una sumus*, can be sustained only so long as we stick within the objectivity of the Laws of the Game. This Code of Ethics comes out of allegation by counter-allegation, and the opponents of FIDE President Florencio Campomanes, including Kasparov, have reason to fear that it will hand to those who are the chief miscreants a stick with which to beat down opposition and criticism. Thus clause 2d of the draft Code would hold anyone in breach who writes or says anything *abusive or insulting in a case where having regard to all circumstances hatred is likely to be stirred up against any racial group within FIDE.* This is the sort of territory on which the governing body of a sport should fear to tread. It should be obvious that such a clause, in which intolerance is smuggled in on the back of the honourable sentiment of anti-racism, can be dangerously abused. Remember Kasparov's "FIDE Mafia" jibe? It was intemperate and remains unjustified. But a climate in which people dare not say such things is much worse.

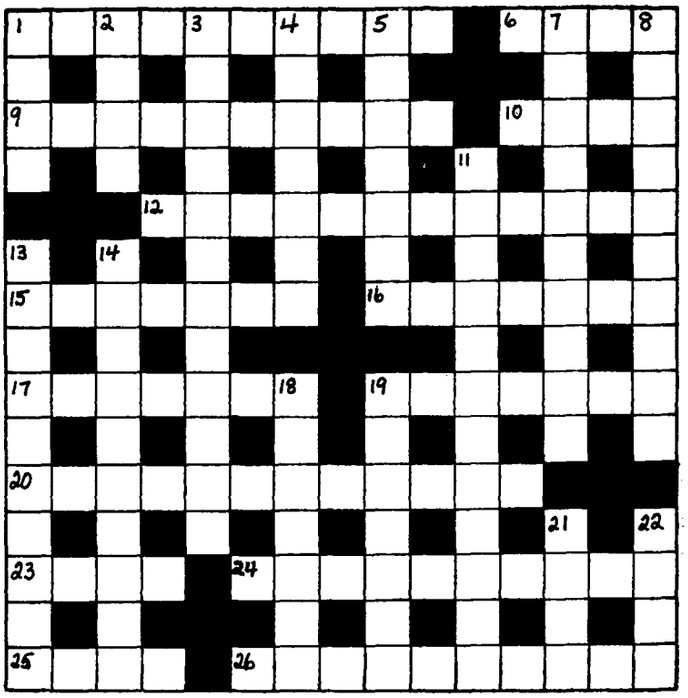
•

August is the great playing season in the British chess calendar. The British chess championships themselves are to be held in Blackpool this year, from 1-13 August in the Norbreck Castle Hotel. Two who would be major contenders, Short and Speelman, will be conspicuous by their absence. The reason is that immediately after the championship they will be locking horns in their world championship quarter-final match. The match is being sponsored by **Pilkington Glass** to the tune of a £20,000 prize fund, and will be played in Cinema One of the Barbican Centre. The games are scheduled for 18, 20, 21, 23 and 25 August with tickets available from the Barbican box office (01-638 8891) at £5 per game or £25 for the whole match.

George Botterill

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1602, New Statesman & Society, Foundation House, Perseverance Works, 38 Kingsland Road, London E2 8DQ, by first post 8 August.



Name _____

Address _____

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Crossword 1602

ACROSS

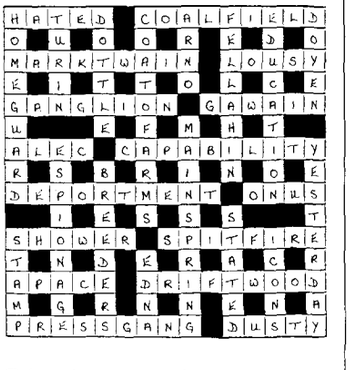
1. Self-interest makes former mate deny epic changes (10)
6. It is fashionable to leave Marx unfinished (4)
9. Caught a girl embracing Africans back in school (10)
10. A prayer for peace comes at journey's end (4)
12. Study the aroma of the countryside when getting better (12)
15. Danced, blushing as the clothing is removed (7)
16. Commotion in which one is mixed up with a rum lot (7)
17. Give new flame to the girl in fresh make-up (7)
19. Groups like the Muses? (7)
20. Children have children, as the cartoonist showed (12)
23. Song of a headless woman (4)
24. He may change his train at speed, although he is not a passenger (10)
25. Run for the line (4)
26. Eulogist of grey paints (10)

DOWN

1. Every fruit has soft part cut out (4)
2. Give up about a pound for entertainment (4)
3. Entertainment in violent progress if there were no Tory showing disapproval (12)
4. Turned out there is nothing up with an egghead surrounded by disease (7)
5. Arrived with a set in Arthur's place (7)
7. Rider whose manor is in ruins (10)
8. The man who makes money has to surpass it with a record (10)
11. Changing trains quietly but austerely (12)
13. A number to put up where runs are shown (10)
14. Slips discover one after the ball goes into the covers (10)
18. Material provided by separatists behind the river (7)
19. The last is always included in the next remedy (7)
21. Car in reversing on the motorway (4)
22. Speed in playing the black notes (4)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1600



Prizewinners to 1600

William Allan (Edinburgh)
J L Moss (Ludlow, Shropshire)
Stanley Wright (London SE9)

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Diana Eden is cast into the Lower Depths by the direness of the dinner party and guests

It is fast becoming clear that until halfway through my thirties I led a sheltered, and entirely satisfactory, way of life. It was only then, when a hospitable new friend apologetically enquired whether I would mind "this once, eating in the kitchen?", that it occurred to me that an alternative existed. Alas, exist it does. J P Sartre got it wrong. Hell is *not*, in fact, simply other people. What hell is, is other people's hellish *dinner parties*.

With its ingredients of overwrought hostess (it is still poor benighted wives who shop and sweat and strain to service social functions), over-convivial host and overly fascist fellow guests, the dinner party is the devil's non-casual dress rehearsal for the Lower Depths.

And it is both a lowering and a baffling fact of life that, however sweet and liberal the natures of one's friends, *their* friends may be, and mostly are, *quite* a different matter. Eveningfuls of unsuspected horror lie in wait beyond the welcome mat at the homes of dear old chums.

There is no finer example of the foodie's maxim "You are what you eat" than the difference that exists between the free and easy sallies bandied over plates of scrambled eggs, wolfed down in close proximity to a cosily slummy stove, and the constipated, competitive volleys that pass for conversation across the endless courses and the sauces served up in the dining room at formal evening meals.

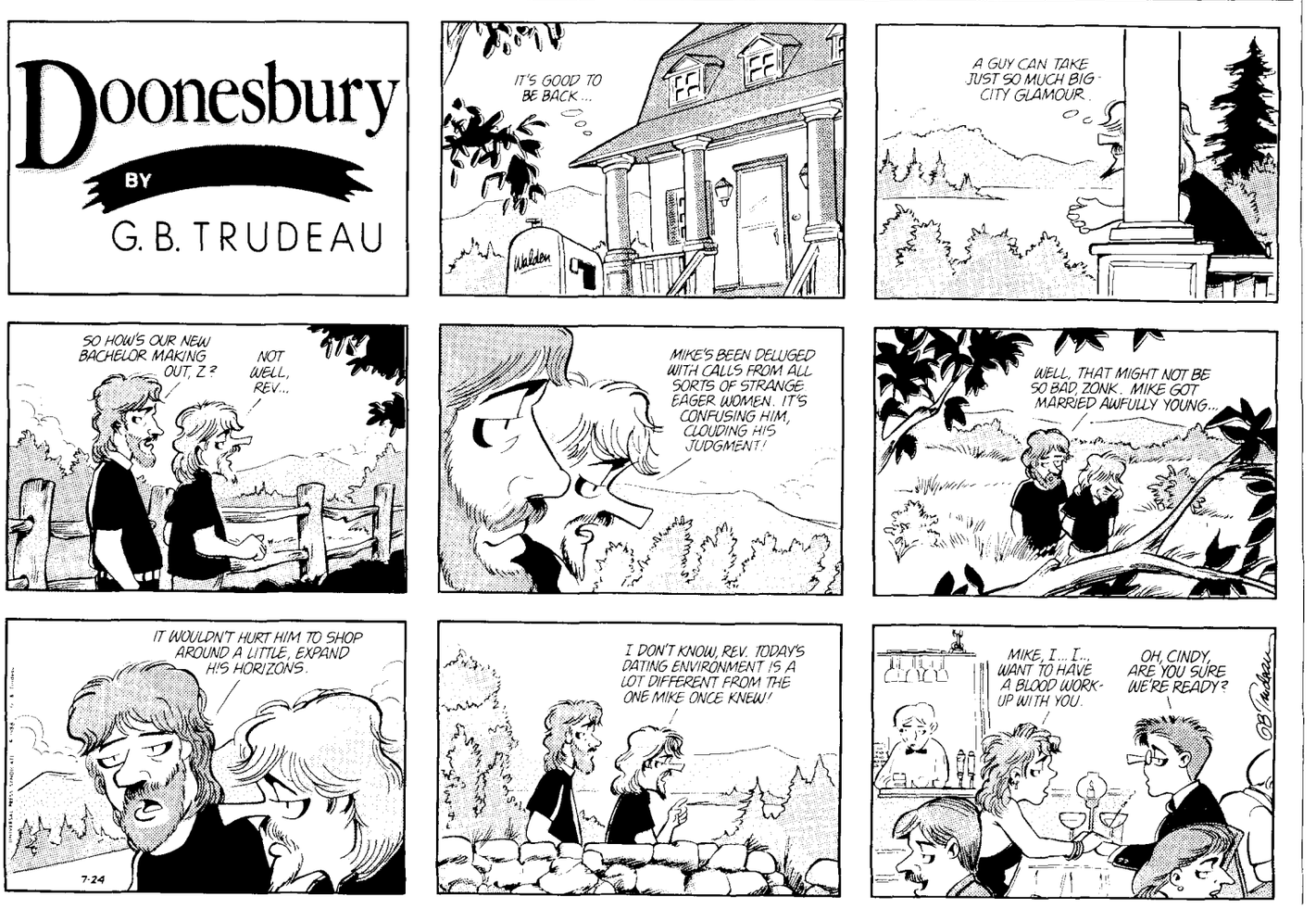
However, seated at a newly polished table—which groans beneath the weight of freshly Silvo-ed candelabra, recently macheted flowers and an arsenal of sparkling cutlery, inhibitingly arrayed in a descending order of rank that would pass muster with a demanding consultant surgeon—the unsurprising beads of perspiration upon our hostess's brow compel us toward compassion and an attempt at scintillating chat.

Top of the agenda when the guests are clearly richer, even, than the food, is that red hot hors d'oeuvre topic of the eighties—the perennial servant problem. After anecdotes that feature unsatisfactory chars, au pairs and nannies we move on, during the salmon, to house prices and holidays abroad or, should the gathering include a paranoid psychotic of a literary disposition, the implicit personal insult behind the scandalous inadequacies of The Publisher's Advance.

As the pudding trolley ominously trundles down the hall, the only sound I hear is the distant rumble of the tumbril. Come the serving of the coffee, I have taken out my knitting.

But, eventually, a feast is as good as enough. A gentle, tolerant and, now, reclusive actor whom I know took permanently to his bed after such a soiree in the Year of '72 when, as all you non-dinner-partyers will no doubt well recall, the miners were negotiating a minimum wage of a hundred quid a week. A suburban dowager, who was seated to the right of him in every possible way, attacked her carmelised orange and the miners' claim with vigour.

"Indefensible greed!" she cried, as she shovelled down yet another mouthful. "Miners can't need *more money*. They never *go* anywhere, they never have to *socialise*!" From that liberating moment onwards, neither did my friend.


Doonesbury
BY
G. B. TRUDEAU
IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK...
A GUY CAN TAKE JUST SO MUCH BIG-CITY GLAMOUR.
SO HOW'S OUR NEW BACHELOR MAKING OUT, Z?
NOT WELL, REV...
MIKE'S BEEN DELUGED WITH CALLS FROM ALL SORTS OF STRANGE, EAGER WOMEN. IT'S CONFUSING HIM, CLOUDING HIS JUDGMENT!
WELL, THAT MIGHT NOT BE SO BAD, ZONK. MIKE GOT MARRIED AWFULLY YOUNG...
IT WOULDN'T HURT HIM TO SHOP AROUND A LITTLE, EXPAND HIS HORIZONS.
7-24
I DON'T KNOW, REV. TODAY'S DATING ENVIRONMENT IS A LOT DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE MIKE ONCE KNEW!
MIKE, I... I... WANT TO HAVE A BLOOD WORK-UP WITH YOU.
OH, CINDY, ARE YOU SURE WE'RE READY?
GBTrudeau

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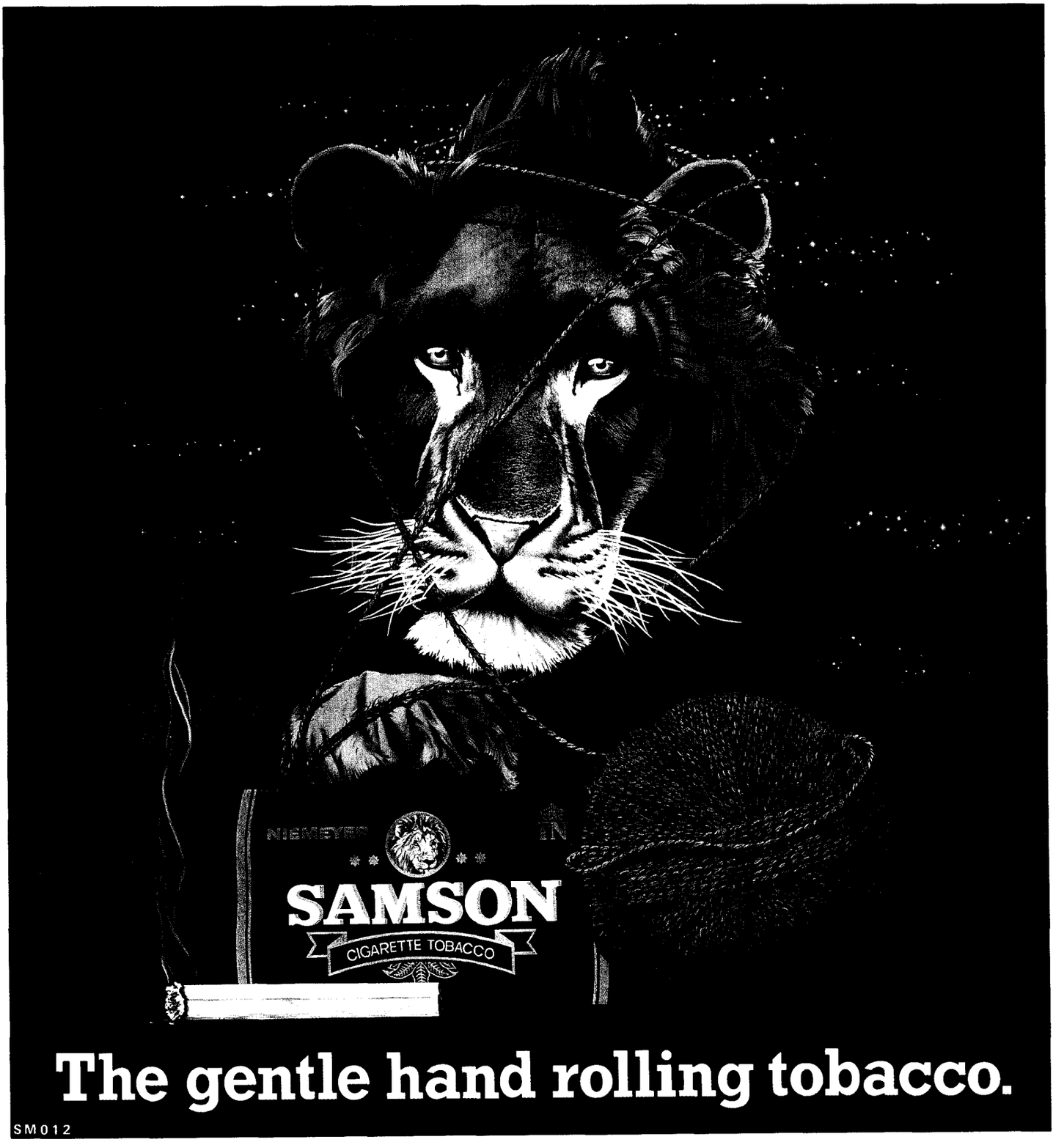

Warning: SMOKING CAN CAUSE FATAL DISEASES
Health Departments' Chief Medical Officers

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